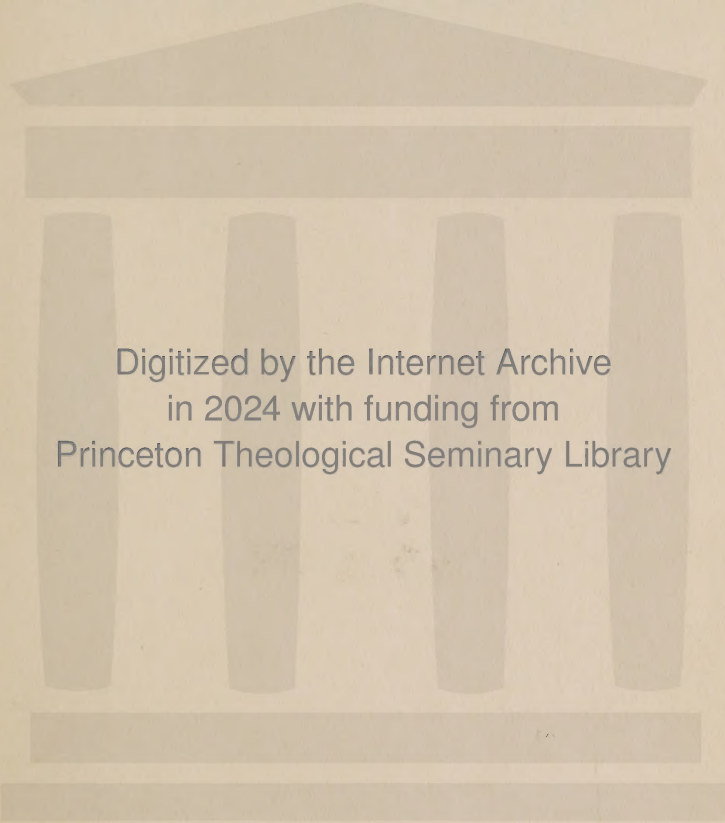


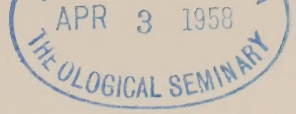
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CHARLES WESLEY
AND HIS COLLEAGUES





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CHARLES WESLEY
AND HIS COLLEAGUES

By **CHARLES WESLEY FLINT** ✓
Bishop of the Methodist Church

WITH INTRODUCTORY NOTES BY
GERALD KENNEDY, G. BROMLEY OXNAM
AND NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

Public Affairs Press, Washington, D. C.

TO A SAINTED FATHER AND MOTHER WHO NAMED
THEIR LAST-BORN AFTER THE AUTHOR OF
"JESUS, LOVER OF MY SOUL."

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INTRODUCTORY NOTES

When the manuscript which has become this book was laid on my desk, there was no indication of its author. I have a number of such writings placed before me from time to time, and usually they fail to rouse much enthusiasm. I started to read this with the assumption that it could be skimmed rapidly but I soon changed my mind. I found myself reading it carefully because the material was extremely interesting.

It came as a great and joyous surprise to learn later that this was the work of my beloved friend and colleague, Bishop Charles Wesley Flint. I would have been happy to commend it under any circumstances but knowing the author as I do increases my joy one hundred fold. I regard it without any reservation, as one of the most interesting and important studies in the field of Methodism's beginnings. As an amateur investigator in the field, I can appreciate the fine scholarship and research which has gone into the writing of this book.

There are few pleasures to surpass the sharing of a favorite writing with a friend. It is in that spirit that I commend *Charles Wesley and His Colleagues*.

BISHOP GERALD KENNEDY

This book is a significant event for all of those who come out of the Wesley tradition. Bishop Flint is an authority on the life and work of the Wesleys, having given years of study to these outstanding personalities and their significance in spiritual history. Moreover, he has brought to the subject his scholarly, incisive mental processes. Those who are familiar with the speaking and writing of Bishop Flint will open this book with anticipation for they are well aware of his humor, uniqueness, and penetrating insights.

A new book on the Wesleys is most timely in view of the resurgence of religious interest which characterizes our generation. What better guarantee of the validity of a contemporary religious revival if it should take on the spirit of that epoch-making Wesleyan movement. A re-emergence in our times of the force that transformed England in

the days of the Wesleys would be the greatest possible guarantee of the future of mankind. Bishop Flint's book will be a rewarding spiritual and intellectual experience.

NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

Charles Wesley Flint has written a superlative biography. Rigorously realistic, it is fully aware of the weaknesses of John Wesley, Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield. Its frankness enhances the greatness of these men, who human enough, do nevertheless stand in history not only worthy of highest honor but most certainly men who have earned the appellation "great".

Bishop Flint has wisely treated the lives of John and Charles Wesley as inseparable in thinking and in service. Charles Wesley is portrayed as the great hymnodist that he was but is seen to be an evangelist, a thinker, a poet, a preacher, a most fascinating personality. Each brother complemented the other and each became the stronger because of the criticism of the other. Here are most informing chapters dealing with the attitude of the Wesley brothers toward the Church, politics, theology, evangelism.

Bishop Flint, with the painstaking care of the scholar, has moved from sources to conclusion. We see the development of the minds of John and Charles Wesley and are warned against drawing conclusions from statements quoted from an early period but subsequently modified by the careful thought of a later day.

Modern pedagogues may well study the pedagogy of the Wesley home. Fresh light is brought upon the educational methods of eighteenth century English universities. A highly realistic chapter considers the relations of John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield to women. Bishop Flint wisely indicates that social practices now condemned or commended must be seen in the light of what was then contemporary thought.

This book deserves careful reading and wide circulation. It corrects many misapprehensions concerning early and later Methodism. It has a significant contribution to make to the ecumenical movement and to current endeavors that look toward church union, but above all else it reveals with striking clarity the religious power that was released by these brothers. The source of religious vitality is strikingly sketched, and the book, if carefully studied, may lead to a religious revival grounded in sound intellectualism with full recognition of the place of the heart in setting the will. I count it an honor to have read it and a privilege to commend it.

BISHOP G. BROMLEY OXNAM

PREFACE

Charles Wesley has been neglected and underestimated. This book tries to correct that in part. Some have unintentionally belittled Charles in magnifying John. Some judge Charles by the psychology of a later century or by their own.

John Wesley needs no further eulogy; his works praise him. But Charles' influence on John and Charles' service to religion have not been fully appraised. Charles' reputation as a hymn-writer has eclipsed his other abilities in many minds.

John and Charles were strangely one, both as brothers and even more as co-workers; the life of either cannot be written without including much of that of the other; it was a joint work. But John has been written about more and is better known than Charles. John's work was more spectacular, his evangelistic efforts more widespread and longer; his organizing ability more outstanding. Also he wrote much in Journals, letters, and tracts.

Charles' own words are used herein quite extensively, giving an autobiographical flavor.

The first chapter tells of the England into which Charles Wesley was born; the second summarizes the Wesley family. Although this background may be familiar to some readers, it should be kept constantly in mind to understand Charles Wesley adequately.

Two subjects tended to draw John and Charles apart—one personal, relation to women; the other ecclesiastical, relation to the Established Church. Since Charles' mind and motives have been misunderstood, much space is given to the first in the Chapter "The Trio and Women," while a whole Chapter is given to the second.

Both John and Charles Wesley were human; both had their faults; both were necessarily creatures of their times. In some talents they were quite alike; in others, quite different as two strong individuals. For about twenty years, as one, they were itinerating evangelists, going throughout England and Ireland, proclaiming the same message. Then one continued to be an evangelist while the other became more a shepherd confining his labors mainly to London, Bristol, and vicinities, enabling John to continue to be "at large". John also carried on for a few years after Charles' last illness and death.

Considering what has grown out of their ministry, one can see that

the Holy Spirit certainly used these labors in a wonderful way, even as each has been so richly endowed with gifts and powers.

Chapters I to XIII inclusive are in effect the early history of a movement which resulted in the launching of a new denomination and the quickening of several others.

* * *

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* * *

For help on the manuscript I am indebted to my wife, Clara Y. Flint, my daughter, Dr. Lois H. Flint, my son Dr. George Y. Flint, and many others; to none more than to Miss M. E. Wilson, a secretary extraordinary.

CHARLES WESLEY FLINT

Washington, D. C.

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CHAPTER I

Charles Wesley's England

Rightly to appraise an event, we should know its era; rightly to understand a man, we should know the times in which he lived. This is even more necessary when we seek to get from the event or from the man guidance for our own day. Too often we read and think of the Wesleys from our viewpoint, with our background, instead of with theirs.

It is not easy for us to picture the political and religious conditions of England in the eighteenth century and to make appraisals accordingly. England was all Roman Catholic until the Reformation, which began under Kings Henry VIII and Edward VI. Henry VIII felt that he as King ought to replace the Pope. Later there was a struggle between King and Parliament. The people were won to Protestantism only gradually, for the masses were attached to Romish superstition and practice. Back and forth, from one to the other, England swung with her various rulers; when a King or Queen turned toward one group, the other hoped, with more or less patience, for a successor who would reverse the trend. Following the Reformation under Henry VIII and Edward VI came Mary, who veered the nation toward Popery and burned many noble Protestant leaders at the stake. Then came Elizabeth, mainly favoring Protestants. Great persecution of Catholics occurred during her reign. James I followed Elizabeth and fought with a predominantly Protestant Parliament when he edged toward Catholic association. Charles I, whose queen was a Papist (he is reported to have died in that faith), restored Papal tendencies; but by this time, the Reformation had taken firm root among the people. The Puritans, just, serious and self-controlled, with obvious weaknesses as well as virtues, rose rapidly. The nation was seriously divided in both politics and religion. These divisions developed suspicion, enmity, hatred, civil war and finally resulted in the execution of a king.

Then came Oliver Cromwell, with his despotic, republican Protestantism of the Puritan variety. Revulsion against this regime's extremes brought the restoration of kings, Charles II being the first one. Under him, the Episcopal party got the upper hand, crowding out the Dissenters. Samuel Wesley, Charles' father, was born early in this

reign. James II, trying to restore Popery, was deposed in favor of William and Mary. She was the Protestant daughter of Catholic James II, and under her and her husband Protestants were in full power.

John and Charles Wesley were born in the next reign, that of Anne, who was a Protestant also, even though a sister of Mary. Under the Georges who followed, Protestantism was established more firmly. It was under Anne and the first two Georges that Gibraltar, Canada, and India were added to the English possessions, and England appeared to prosper. This was in the Wesleys' days.

In this see-saw of Protestantism and Popery, there was much talk about the "Church" and the "Dissenters", which has to be explained. The Church of England was the Established Church, the State Church, associated inseparably with the King and the Government. The Dissenters or the Nonconformists were those who would not "conform" to the rule and practices of the Established Church and its Bishops. These included the Presbyterians, strong in Scotland, the Baptists, and other Independents.

The Established Church was wealthy by reason of accumulations through centuries of gifts and bequests of money and lands by pious individuals and grants by government. How vast was the aggregate of these general Church endowments is indicated by the fact that the income alone in 1953 was nearly £8,000,000.

Almost all clergymen got their financial support from sources outside the parish and from official levies. The minister had for his personal benefit the use of land which went with his "living" and usually was quite a large factor. Tithes, also for ministerial support, were a tenth of all the produce of all productive land in the parish which was reserved nationally from the earliest times for the purposes of religion. They were then taken for granted and paid as a matter of course with a unanimity and compulsion almost like taxes today, regardless of whether the minister was liked or disliked. "Church rates" for the maintenance of Church services were assessed on every householder and were compulsory by law.

The minister was practically financially independent of his people; furthermore, the particular congregations had no direct responsibility for the appointment of their ministers. Many, especially the Bishops, were appointed by the King or Queen, some after more or less consultation, others quite arbitrarily on the basis of favoritism. Many "livings" were the gifts of individuals, others of Bishops, and some of various bodies, such as Oxford and Cambridge. Samuel Wesley was appointed to Epworth by the wish of Queen Mary. Church and State

were almost one. It is hard for those accustomed to the local church's voice in the appointment and to the local church's support to visualize clergy so completely independent of local membership.

In the historical development, so many were the royal decrees and acts of Parliament that they are confusing to us, as they must then have been to the magistrates and the people. Some decrees and acts were for, others against, Catholics; some for, others against Dissenters. After decades of turmoil and controversy, the Church was tired and torpid, not even comprehending, let alone meeting, the challenge of a changing society.

A minor but important trend grew out of the reaction against the arbitrary restrictions and sweeping changes of Puritanism and Cromwell. It was against intolerance in general, but it took the peculiar popular prejudice against "enthusiasm" in religion. Strictly speaking, "enthusiasm" referred to direct Divine seizure by the spirit or to extraordinary gifts of the spirit; but generally in the Wesleys' days it included any form of zeal in religion or even any personal dealings with God.

More striking was the natural accompaniment of the turning to Protestantism. The struggles of Mary Stuart, a Catholic, against Elizabeth; the Pope's endeavor to depose the latter; the invasion of England by missionaries from Rome; and the attempt of Catholic Spain to conquer England by the Armada, made patriotism synonymous with Protestantism. This was heightened by the efforts of the Jacobite Papist Pretender against George I and George II, reaching the height of tension in the middle of the career of the Wesleys. The wars with France, supporter of the "Pretender", clinched the identification of Romanism and treason in the popular mind.

But the most serious trend was in religion—or rather irreligion. Two causes produced this trend: first, the identification of Church and State, with appointments in the Church by the Crown or by influential individuals; second, the constant effort under all rulers to advance religion by legislation or by official declaration, and also to secure, by force, uniformity in thought and in the practice of worship. Religion as a result was, in general, external—observances and forms. It was institutional rather than personal, ecclesiastical and political rather than spiritual.

Two errors must be guarded against in appraising the clergy of that period. One is not recognizing at their full value the good, the faithful, and the earnest. Several Bishops—Butler and Berkeley, for example—were high-minded, talented and consecrated. Many of the clergy were sympathetic and some worked with the Wesleys—Grimshaw,

Venn, Walker, Fletcher, etc. Of the rank and file there were many Samuel Wesleys and many like Goldsmith's father, immortalized in "The Deserted Village." "The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge" and "The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts" grew up in that century.

On the other hand, we must not regard these as typical of the times. Inevitably under such a system as prevailed, too many of the higher clergy were sycophants, truckling to the King or to their wealthy or influential benefactors. Too much they regarded church positions as political offices.

Many of the lower clergy, like too many of the higher, merited Tyerman's description: "The clergy, in many instances, were lazy or drunken or non-resident. Numbers of them were most miserably paid and had to practice meannesses to eke out insufficient incomes. Others were more fond of preaching over pewter pots in dirty alehouses than of preaching in their pulpits or of visiting their flocks. Others revelled amid all the luxuries of a fat benefice, leaving the duties of their parishes to young, half-starved curates who had to live on the mere gleanings of their masters' vintage, and others had a far greater penchant for persecuting Methodists than for saving souls." There was indeed a great chasm, financially and otherwise, between the higher and lower clergy. Curates or assistants were paid out of the pocket of the incumbent minister.

Preaching at its best was intellectual, classical, dry; it consisted of moral essays, appealing only to prudential motives. Preaching at its worst can only be imagined! Sir William Blackstone, the great jurist, went to hear every clergyman of note in London out of curiosity and "did not hear a single discourse which had more Christianity in it than the writings of Cicero"; and it would have been impossible for him to discover from what he heard "whether the preacher were a follower of Confucius, or Mohammed, or of Christ." Emotions were taboo; resistance to vice and evangelical concern were conspicuously absent; and yet the pulpit as a moulder of public thought was of even greater importance in that day than it is now, since the general press as we know it was not yet developed.

Religion was indeed at a low ebb. Carlyle sarcastically said of this era, "Stomach well alive, soul extinct." Voltaire claimed that there was just enough religion in England "to distinguish Tories who had little religion from the Whigs who had less." More analytically, Bishop Berkeley declared religion had collapsed "to a degree that has never been known in any Christian country." Bishop Butler says of the same period: ". . . to be taken for granted by many persons that

Christianity is not so much as a subject for inquiry but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious"; and Archbishop Secker: "an open and professed disregard of religion is become . . . the distinguishing character of the present age." Thus they testify both to conditions and to episcopal concern! Personally-experienced, warmly-spiritual religion seemed unknown. Christianity was regarded as nothing more than assent to correct opinions.

The higher intellectual circles were not atheistic but, as Deists, had an absentee God. They rejected revelation, reduced Christ to a mere man, and made the Bible an almost despised book. "Life was without providence and death without hope." They were against any emotional appeal as contrary to intellect and reason. Moderation was enjoined; zeal was decidedly in disfavor. The Church and religion had intellectually able defenders, but in their many controversial articles they dealt with the natural and not the supernatural or divine factors of religion.

It surely also is hard for us in this day to realize that people generally believed that God had irrevocably called some to be saved and some to be damned—and this on the background of a belief in the human-like wrath of an absolute God, an awful judgment and a literally accepted, everlasting-burning, torturing hell! All Churches so taught, and it was openly believed and consciously or subconsciously accepted by almost all.

Moreover, in that century the general mental attitude was more of acceptance, especially of religious teaching, than of challenge. Peasants were docile and submissive, not only to their "betters" in class distinction but to the clergy also. How different from today!

When religion languishes, immorality flourishes. In the opening of the eighteenth century; there were, generally speaking, only two classes in England—the higher and the lower; the powerful or the rich, and the peasants or the poor. Many of the poor, which was the more numerous class, lived near starvation, while the upper class, the only ones who could vote, reveled in luxury. The pulpits taught and the people believed that these conditions were ordained by God.

The court circles were characterized by open bribery and corruption. Walpole, the Prime Minister, made such his regular policy; Lord Bolingbroke was an infidel and a rotter; Chesterfield clever, cynical, and profligate. Among both ruling groups and wealthy classes, adultery was the rule rather than the exception, and almost a sport. Drunkenness was, of course, an accompaniment and looked upon with more than tolerance, almost with admiration.

What then of the lower class? It was an age of unequaled gin

drinking and universal maudlin drunkenness. Every sixth house in London was a gin shop. The consumption of spirits in England rose from 3,500,000 gallons in 1727 to 11,000,000 gallons in 1751. The masses were brutal and calloused, ignorant and rude, debauched and violent, lawless and indecent. Their very sports were degrading and coarsening, mainly involving cruelty as in bull- or bear-baiting, cock-fighting or bloody pugilism. Human life was cheap; law was sanguinary, over two hundred offenses, including petty theft, calling for the death penalty. Public hangings were "shows" with some spectators even paying for grandstand seats or places of vantage while multitudes packed the procession streets. Gibbets garnished the cities and the highways. Women, for some crimes, were to be "publicly burned."

The slave trade, brutal and brutalizing, reached its nadir in this period.

Over four thousand men were imprisoned for debt each year. Extravagance by both classes resulted in general gambling, reaching its apotheosis in the South Sea Bubble and national bankruptcy.

In fact, the House of Lords was compelled to raise a Committee "to examine into the causes of the present notorious immorality and profaneness." Their report was surely a severe indictment of the times. Lady Montague reflected the attitude toward religion and morals when she sarcastically reported a move to take the "not" out of the Commandments and to put it in the Creed.

Into such a moral atmosphere, to us almost unimaginable, came the Wesleys.

Nor can we, without a vivid imagination, picture the physical conditions of that day. Roads between towns and villages hardly existed, isolating them from one another rather than connecting them. The stage coach ran north only to York. Journeys were made mainly on horseback. There were very few public coaches; the one from London to Liverpool ran only once a month, and the trip took sixteen days. Accidents to riders were numerous, near-accidents quite common, as the main "roads" were not more than cart tracks over bogs, quagmires, clay pits, and crevices, and crossed by many unbridged drainage ditches. These were rutted in dry weather, all but impassable in rain or snow. Highwaymen were bold, dangerous, and ubiquitous.

While the French Revolution and the American Revolution both came in the Wesleys' days, of greater significance was the Industrial Revolution which began in England in pre-Wesley days but developed during the period of their activity. At the opening of the eighteenth century, the population of England and Wales was about

5,350,000, of which London with its parishes boasted of 600,000 in 1739. England and Wales grew to over 9,000,000 in the century, gaining about 70 per cent in one hundred years. England was not ready to cope wisely with the increase of population and its redistribution. The cities grew apace. The population of Liverpool is said to have grown to 40,000 by 1760. Both Birmingham and Sheffield grew from 4,000 to 30,000 in that same period.

Yet with all the growth and shifts in population, the Established Church was static, creating scarcely one new parish in that period. Methodism, on the other hand, was vital, appealing specially to a middle class which, indeed, it created in large part out of the lower classes.

Into such an environment, strange to us, were John and Charles Wesley projected.

The Wesley Family

Great-grandfather Bartholomew Wesley was the son of a Knight and married the daughter of a Knight. Great-grandson John tells how in early Puritan days, Prince Charles, later King Charles II, trying to escape to France, spent a night secretly in Bartholomew's parish. A suspicious blacksmith tried to report to the rector, but as the latter was at prayers, his "praying without ceasing" allowed Charles to escape!

One biographer says grandson Samuel, the Wesley brothers' father, inherited two Irish traits—dabbling in rhyme and liking for a factional dispute.

Grandfather John Wesley (another John!) studied Orientals at Oxford, kept a diary, and used shorthand. Before a Bishop, he based the call to preach upon "grace, gifts, and fruit." After being imprisoned several times for preaching, he died early.

The other grandfather of John and Charles Wesley was Dr. Samuel Annesley. When his first wife and child died, he married again and had twenty-four more children. His second wife's father wrote for a Parliamentary Committee, "The First Century of Scandalous Malignant Priests".

Grandfather John left among his children two sons, Matthew, a well-to-do surgeon in London, and Samuel, father of Charles Wesley. Born four months after his father was ejected by the Act of Uniformity, Samuel was only sixteen when his father died. He was educated by Dissenter charity at various academies established for the Dissenting ministry. After he was commissioned by Dissenters to write an attack on the Established Church, his research and some disillusioning experiences led him to a right-about-face and a determination to go to Oxford and enter the ministry of the Established Church.

To avoid an argument with a maiden aunt and his mother with whom he lived, he rose early one morning, went out quietly, and walked to Oxford. He had only two pounds and six shillings after discharging his obligations to Dissenters as far as he could. At Oxford he supported himself as a 'servitor', performing menial tasks for fellow-students; he left with ten pounds and fifteen shillings—a

testimony to his frugality and ability, since he had received during his course not more than five shillings from outside sources.

At isolated Epworth where the parishioners were ignorant, brutal, and factional, his plain speaking, his High Church practices, and his Tory politics alienated them, led them to maim his animals, burn his crops, and even probably to set fire to his house. His activity in politics on the unpopular losing side led to his arrest and imprisonment for debt; whereupon his wife out of their poverty sent the prisoner her rings, which he at once chivalrously returned.

In addition to his lack of tact, he had a hot temper and sharp tongue at times. Emily, one of his daughters, once referred to her father's "unaccountable love of discord." But as a pastor he was faithful, indefatigable, and zealous, visiting all his parishioners regularly, reproving, rebuking, and exhorting. Not much fruit appeared in his lifetime, but years after his death his son found it bountiful.

Samuel was elected to Convocation, which was an Assembly of clergy when Parliament met, for consultation on ecclesiastical matters, and for making canons and examining books. His election to membership testified to both his learning and general ability, and was a signal honor. The duty of attending Convocation after such a choice and the possible opportunities it afforded, probably more than justified the expense of three years' attendance, even though his family was suffering from poverty.

His fearlessness was unquestioned. It is recorded that in his parish at South Ormsby where six children were born, a woman, living irregularly with an Earl to whom Samuel's patron had rented the hall nearby the parsonage, tried to cultivate a friendship with Susanna. Finding her with his wife in the parsonage one day, without a word, Samuel ushered her out—a testimony to fearlessness overruling tactfulness. As a result, he had to leave South Ormsby.

When he found a pilferer putting ears of tithe corn into a bag, this tiny parson marched the thief by the arm to the market place where he silently exposed him to the gathered crowd.

On another occasion in a public restaurant, he had the waiter take a glass of water to an officer soldier who was swearing vociferously, with instructions to the officer to wash out his mouth. Heroically, also, he emphatically refused to leave Epworth after much persecution.

He was no mean poet, though he modestly called his work "beating rhyme." Most of his works, even by the standards of that day, were too long. Unlike his sons he did not rewrite, polish, and refine his writings. His main productions witness to his breadth of mind and

range of vision. The last part of his work was written with one hand paralyzed and with a body badly crippled.

The best thing Samuel ever did was to marry Susanna Annesley. But, for him, it had also its disadvantages; she was so able, so wonderful, that she has seemed to put him in the shade. Indeed biographers have tended to belittle Samuel while exalting Susanna. They each had ideas of their own; both were independent; both could be stubborn. Of course they differed. Too much has been read into or read out of Susanna's statement to John on a particular issue: "It is an unhappiness almost peculiar to our family that your father and I seldom think alike." But their differences added piquancy to the life at Epworth. They also revealed a real camaraderie.

To illustrate their independence of one another, son John, possibly with imagination mixed with tradition, records one instance. Susanna did not share her husband's loyalty to King William. She thought of the King as only "Prince of Orange" and not a rightful sovereign because not a descendant of King James. Noticing she did not say "Amen" when in morning prayers he prayed for the King, he exclaimed, using her pet name, "Sukey, if we are to have two kings, we must have two beds"; and without further adieu he went on his horse to London, remaining there and at Convocation until the death of William and the coronation of Anne removed the cause of disagreement. John Wesley was the first child born after that reunion.

The difference between Samuel and Susanna, while not always sharp, was nevertheless fundamental. For example, to offset his absence during one of Samuel's long sessions at Convocation in London and to counteract the ill influence of the curate, she opened the Sunday evening parsonage services to all who wanted to come. Many came and the service had a splendid influence in the community. But Susanna read selected sermons and commented—"preached". Protests went to Samuel. In an exchange of letters she vigorously and logically defended herself and the procedure, concluding, "If you do, after all, think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me you *desire* me to do so, for that will not satisfy my conscience but send me your *positive command* in such full and express terms as may absolve me from guilt and punishment for neglecting this opportunity of doing good."

To get this incident in due perspective, we should take ourselves into that century, when wives should be "subject" to their husbands, when women were not supposed to speak in public services, and when there were laws against holding a worship service outside a regular church.

Susanna and Samuel supplemented one another. He tried farming on the side but was not equipped by his city training to be a farmer. Result—he had to borrow. He had to depend more and more on the practical Susanna, to whom he left the management of the lands as well as the tithes.

He was a poet rather than a man of business. He knew that these two did not go together. In a letter to the Archbishop in 1702 he said, "He that's born to be a poet must, I am afraid, live and die so [poor]"; and in another letter he refers to "my not understanding worldly affairs." Susanna, with more worldly wisdom, had to assume the responsibilities of the household, recognizing the truth regarding her husband. On one occasion she wrote to her brother in India who had been sharply critical of Samuel. After making a spirited defence and saying he was not "factious" but "zealous in a good cause", she replied to her brother's statement "He is not fit for business": "This I must assent to, and must own I was mistaken when I did think him fit for it. My own experience has convinced me that he is one of those who our Saviour saith is not so wise in their generation as the children of the world"; but she said, showing both her understanding and her appreciation: ". . . I should think it a thousand pities that a man of his brightness and rare endowments of learning and useful knowledge in relation to the Church of God, should be confined to an obscure corner of the country, where his talents are buried; and he, determined to a way of life for which he is not so well qualified as I could wish."

Poverty and debt cursed the Epworth parsonage throughout Samuel's life, and even at his death the sufferings and privations of his widow and daughters have caused criticism of him. But he felt them keenly. He seemed to be caught "in the fell clutch of circumstance." What did he not have to go through! His salary was always small and inadequate; he lost the income from a chaplaincy through politics; his coming to Epworth not only involved moving expenses but charges to be paid on entering into the possession of the living. So he had to borrow. Two fires, one a two-thirds loss and another a total loss, required rebuilding and refurnishing. His barn fell down, so a new one had to be built. He had to increase his borrowings. Parishioners, stabbing his cows, dried up a main source of supply for his large family. They also burned one crop of flax. Another crop failed, and the low price for his grain still further crippled him. Convocation, which he ought to attend, took £50 a year. His hospitality and liberality to charities were considerable; his taxes to both State and Church were more numerous then and fully as onerous as ours—to say nothing of what he had to spend for books. One new baby

each year called for food and clothing while the many illnesses of Susanna made extra help necessary and rendered the business manager inactive. He had to pay heavily to keep his penniless, widowed mother out of jail and for years contributed annually to her support. Then there was the yearly interest on his debt. He saw three sons through Oxford. Aside from his pipe and snuff, however, he had no expensive habits. In all this, we must admire his heroic persistence and cheerfulness and agree with him when he modestly wrote, "I can . . . satisfy any equal judge that a better husband than myself might have been in debt, though perhaps not as deeply, had he been in like circumstances or met with the same misfortunes!" Surely!

His buoyancy and quaint humor never failed. When jailed for debt he wrote his Archbishop, "Now I am at rest for I have come to the haven where I long expected to be . . . and, it may be, do more good in this new parish than in my old one . . . I'm getting acquainted with my brother jailbirds as fast as I can." When twins were born, he wrote to this same Archbishop, "Last night my wife brought me a few children. There are but two yet, a boy and a girl, and I think they are all at present . . ."

This man of God, loyal and consecrated, scholarly poet and faithful priest, of ardent piety and unwavering faith, of untiring zeal and unvarying industry, of decided opinions and bulldog tenacity, of forbearance and endurance, of painstaking love and rigid discipline, was indeed a worthy father to two of England's greatest men.

Reference should here be made to a much-recounted episode at Epworth—the great fire of 1709. Its origin is uncertain; John later raised a question of incendiarism; Samuel, the father, said they had been brewing all day but had put out all fires in late afternoon. The fire had already burned through the thatched roof of the corn chamber when little sister Hetty was awakened between eleven and twelve o'clock by fire falling on her bed. It spread fast. There was not time to put on clothes. They rushed out naked. Servants and some children went out the parlor windows. Susanna, who heavy with child, could not climb out the window, essayed to go out the door and on the third trial waded through the fire, blackening her legs and face, then collapsed in the garden. A nurse had carried Charles, about a year old, and led all the others out except Jacky, aged six, who was still asleep. Soon, hearing his cry, Samuel tried twice to go to him but was driven back. Jacky meanwhile mounted a piece of furniture by the window and was rescued by one man standing on another's shoulders, just as the roof fell in. Samuel got all his family around him, knelt down in the garden, and thanked

God. "He has given me my eight children, let the house go, I am rich enough." One relic of this great fire, found afterward in the garden, was Samuel's Hymn on the Crucifixion, which is still sung:

*"Behold the Saviour of mankind
Nailed to the shameful tree."*

Susanna is described as slim, aquiline, of slight features with classical regularity, of simple dress and coiffure of the day; and withal, as graceful and beautiful. In disposition she was amiable, thoughtful, and devout. Her education at home, mainly probably by her parents, included Latin and Greek with a thorough English education.

From earliest childhood she had heard arguments and debates—Non-conformist versus Established Church—and was very precocious in her religious convictions; so much so that before she was thirteen she conscientiously abandoned her father's church, Nonconformity, and was received into the Church of England. Some biographers think the visits of a seminary student, Samuel Wesley, to Dr. Annesley's home had something to do with her decision, as he went through the same change; but her heart was not more precocious than her head; she probably decided before meeting Samuel. It is certain, however, that he saved her from going against Trinitarianism. Independence of mind and the determination of will were thus early displayed.

She was a most remarkable woman. Her practical common sense, her organizing ability and discipline, her methodical habit of mind, her "time to do everything" and her rare judgment, combined with unflagging energy and profound piety, surrounded and moulded the two leaders of Methodism.

She came from a home at least "well-to-do" to a home of poverty and debt. Always for the remainder of her life she lived in a house half-furnished, with herself and her children poorly clad. But the nearest she came to complaint was once when asked directly by the Archbishop if she had ever absolutely wanted bread. She replied that she had often experienced such difficulty in obtaining it and in paying for it after obtaining it as nearly the same as being deprived of it. At one time, the day before twins were born, she and her husband had only six shillings in the house.

She read much and critically. She corresponded with her children voluminously. She had a private worship period three times a day when she recorded at length her religious thoughts. She bore nineteen children in twenty years, burying nine before they were five years old. She nursed several children through disease, including five with smallpox. She was the business manager of the parsonage and its

lands, with the least possible "help". Surely she was a superwoman! She was indeed not only the mother of John and Charles but also the mother of Methodism. In such a life you would not expect humor. She seemed to lack the softer feminine graces and she was also too busy. But she excelled otherwise. In several of these traits, John was much like her.

Nor was she a teetotaler as we now know it, for the family lived in a different age from ours. They brewed at Epworth and all, at least the male Wesleys, drank ale regularly. Indeed by public letters in the press John claimed to be more or less a connoisseur of brews! Charles records the stock of beers which went with his new residence in London. Susanna warned her first-born to "stay at the third glass." "Nor would," she writes, "I have you concerned that you find yourself warmed and cheered after drinking them." John wrote strongly against spirituous liquors and drunkenness. Indeed the Wesley "Rules" forbade "spirituous liquors." Apparently they did not realize beer and wine drinking created the alcohol appetite, and did not realize the connection between beer and wine drinking and the much-decried prevalent drunkenness. Yes, the times were different! If Susanna lived today with our understanding of the problem, she would doubtless be an ardent and active "white ribboner".

Her writings all illustrate and amplify her characteristics. When John demurred on going to Georgia on her account, she said when consulted, "Had I twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more."

Her early rules on recreation and pleasures are much quoted: "I used to allow myself as much time for recreation as I spent in private devotion . . ." "Take this rule: whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself."

On worldly wisdom she wrote Charles, "I am afraid Patty [her daughter] has several enemies in London . . . It is a pity that honest generous girl has not a little of the subtlety of the serpent with the innocence of the dove." To her daughter "Sukey" she made some observations on religion, "For anyone who makes a profession of religion only because it is the custom of the country in which they live, or because their parents do so, or their worldly interest is thereby secured or advanced, will never be able to stand in the day of temptation, nor shall they ever enter into the kingdom of Heaven."

To her preacher sons she wrote, "Remember, under the Jewish eco-

nomy it was ordained by God Himself that the snuffers of the Temple should be perfect gold; from which we may infer that those who are admitted to serve at the altar . . . ought themselves to be most pure, and free from all scandalous actions. "However curious you may be in searching into the nature, or in distinguishing the properties, or the passions or virtues of human kind for your own private satisfaction, be very cautious in giving nice distinctions in public assemblies; for it does not answer the true end of preaching, which is to mend men's lives, and not fill their heads with unprofitable speculations."

Heredity! Both John and Charles manifest traits from both parents—loyalty to the Established Church and against Dissent, more unalloyed like father Samuel in Charles, more practical like mother Susanna in John; independence and courage in both. We are told that John resembled his father in physiognomy, but he was Susanna's son in his calmness, orderliness, methodology, iron will, and quiet insistence.

While all the family seemed to have inherited Samuel's poetic genius to a greater or less degree, it reached its height in Charles, who also showed his father's mercurial, impetuous temperament and dry humor. Charles was his father's son even as John was his mother's son.

Charles' older brother, the firstborn of Samuel, Sr. and Susanna, was named after his father and dedicated to God even before his birth. He became an ordained clergyman but never had a parish; he was a schoolmaster all his days. Sammy worried his parents because he did not speak a word until nearly five years of age and they feared he was dumb. One day, under a table with the cat while his mother searched for him, he suddenly exclaimed, "Here I am, mother"—his first words—to their great relief and joy.

The later children had all their early education at home; but Sammy had in addition, for one year, a tutor who left more of an impress on his knuckles than on his mind. He entered Westminster School, London, at fourteen years of age where he advanced rapidly. In 1711 he went to Oxford, in less than two years returned with a Master's degree and became an under officer at Westminster. Samuel was instrumental in establishing an Infirmary in London which became, as it is now, St. George's hospital. Later he accepted the headmastership of a private school at Tiverton, which prospered under him.

His marriage was a happy one, although Charles and his sisters, Emily and Martha, apparently did not specially like his wife. Four

of their children, including their only son, died early and are memorialized in the South Cloister of Westminster Abbey.

From his father, Samuel Jr. inherited poetic genius. His more serious and learned poems drew the admiration of Pope, Swift and others of the greatest men of his time.

Loyally High Church he could not understand his young brothers' "aberrations and experiments." Samuel died at forty-nine.

The seven surviving sisters of Charles Wesley had their individual traits and made a lively household. All were regarded as good-looking and, except one, attractive in appearance; all had dark or various shades of auburn hair and dressed neatly but plainly. The girls received all their formal education at home from father and mother. Beyond that, they were self-educated. In such a family there naturally was much interplay and development accordingly.

The isolated, narrow, coarse community in which they were reared gave little opportunity for social life or employment. Poverty further frustrated the girls. Their situation was all but tragic, the future giving a narrow choice—"starving, common service or mean marriage." Epworth had few eligible young men; indeed none worthy of a Wesley.

Emilia, fifteen years older than Charles, as the oldest child was submerged in the hard getting of food and clothing for a large younger family while the frequent confinements of her mother made a heavy demand on her services. She was a good classical scholar, highly cultured, eloquent, kind, affectionate, of excellent taste and balance. But dire circumstances made her temper exacting and her tongue sharp. At forty-three she married a poor apothecary of Epworth. It was an unfortunate marriage.

Susanna or "Sukey", the next living girl, was fun-loving, merry and a bit romantic. She too married unhappily. Her husband was coarse, hard, vulgar, tyrannical and a drunkard.

Mary, the next sister, twelve years older than Charles, was deformed in infancy. Charles playfully and lovingly refers to "a patient grizzle like Moll." At thirty-eight she married her father's impecunious Curate, much younger. The father-in-law got him assigned to Wroote, where both she and the babe died in childbirth after one year of happy married life.

Mehetabel, Hetty or Kitty, was the brightest of all, reading Greek at eight years of age. She was attractive both in face and figure, was gay, exuberant, almost giddy, humorous and witty, appropriately often called "saucy little Hetty."

After being much sought after by local swains, she fell in love with

a local lawyer who kept her "out all night" one night and then abandoned her. The brothers were more lenient than the furious father and mother, John even abusing the opportunity of the pulpit to preach to his father on "charity." Whereupon Charles had to reconcile John and his father! Her parents and a rash vow forced on her a plumber and glazier of Epworth. He was coarse, vulgar, drunken and dissolute. All her children, but one, died within a few hours or days. Later she turned for consolation to her brothers' religion and worked with them in both the Bristol and London Societies.

Anne, Charles' senior by five years, at twenty-three married a local land surveyor—an intelligent, talented, prosperous business man, but intemperate.

Charles expressed his "wonder that one so wise as my mother could give way to such a partiality or did not better conceal it." He referred to Martha, called "Patty" and "Pat", Charles senior by one year. She remarkably resembled John. Boswell says of her in late life, ". . . sister of the Reverend John Wesley, and resembling him, as I thought, both in figure and manners . . ." She had her mother's and her brother John's characteristics; like them, as Charles said, she was "too wise to be witty." But she was big-hearted, responsive to distress. Charles said, "it was vain to give Patty anything to add to her comfort for she always gave it away to some person poorer than herself." But she was hypercritical—a "grumble towel", Charles called her.

While in London she became secretly engaged to a young Oxford student whom John and Charles had introduced. Then they also introduced him at Epworth where he courted and became engaged to the younger sister, Kezia. Jilting her, he returned to Martha, claiming a "revelation from heaven." Charles resented his treatment of his younger sister, and wrote a scathing poem to Martha. Later, learning of the earlier engagement, he was convinced he had written with incomplete knowledge, even justified Martha, but added, "she should not have mismatched herself with so worthless a man." He proved shallow, fickle, unstable. In turn he became a Moravian, a Quietist, and a Deist, later advocating and practising polygamy. Martha stuck to him and surely went the second mile. She nursed a servant girl in her birth-pangs—a seamstress whom he had seduced—and provided for her. When Charles asked her, "How could you give money to your husband's concubine?" she replied, "I knew I could obtain what I wanted from many, but she, poor hapless creature, could not. . . . I did not act as a woman, but as a Christian." She even nursed one of his illegitimate children. But when he fled with one mistress to

Ireland and later with another to the West Indies, she had to acknowledge the separation though she never spoke of him but with kindness. Only one of ten children survived infancy.

In later days she manifested striking erudition, moved in learned society and became a favorite of Dr. Johnson. Boswell called her "the long lank preaching Mrs. Hall." The latter part of her life, principally in London, was fairly happy, even though dependent mainly on her two brothers. She died at eighty-five years of age.

The "fire child", born shortly after the fire, was Kezia or "Kezzy", Charles only younger sister. Since less than fifteen months separated them, she was naturally his favorite sister, and was close to Charles as Martha was to John. Kezzy nursed Charles through two serious illnesses; he was greatly concerned for her religious welfare. She once made a bargain with him to leave off taking snuff "until next May", he to furnish to her a certain book; if he did not she was to feel "at liberty to take as soon as I please."

Never robust, she died at thirty-two years of age.

The story of the Wesley sisters was sad indeed. In these days there probably would have been justifiable divorces; but those days were different.

Early Training

Charles was the eighteenth child of his parents Samuel and Susanna Wesley. Parents had not heard much about birth control or "planned parenthood" in those days. If they had and had heeded it, we surely should not have had Charles, probably not John, the fifteenth child, nor indeed Susanna, who was her mother's twenty-fourth.

Dr. Whitehead, a medical doctor, says that Charles was born prematurely, was wrapped in soft wool neither opening his eyes nor crying until the time when he should have been born; whereupon he did both. He was born when John was four years old, on December 18, 1707, when his mother was nearly thirty-nine years of age. He had delicate health throughout his life.

Since no public schools were available his mother held daily school for him and his sisters. No better account of his early life and education could be given than his mother's reluctant response later to John's persistent requests. In some of her procedures she was of her day rather than of ours; in others she improved upon her day, by which her account should be judged.

July 24, 1732

"Dear Son,

"According to your desire, I have collected the principal rules I observed in educating my family; which I now send you as they occurred to my mind, and you may (if you think they can be of use to any) dispose of them in what order you please.

"The children were always put into a regular method of living, in such things as they were capable of, from their birth: as in dressing, undressing, changing their linen, &c. The first quarter commonly passes in sleep. After that they were, if possible, laid into their cradles awake, and rocked to sleep; and so they were kept rocking till it was time for them to awake. This was done to bring them to a regular course of sleeping; which at first was three hours in the morning and three in the afternoon; afterwards two hours, till they needed none at all.

"When turned a year old (and some before), they were taught to fear the rod, and to cry softly; by which means they escaped abundance of correction they might otherwise have had, and that most

odious noise of the crying of children was rarely heard in the house, but the family usually lived in as much quietness as if there had not been a child among them.

"As soon as they were grown pretty strong, they were confined to three meals a day. At dinner their little table and chairs were set by ours, where they could be overlooked; and they were suffered to eat and drink (small beer) as much as they would; but not to call for anything. If they wanted aught they used to whisper to the maid which attended them, who came and spake to me; and as soon as they could handle a knife and fork, they were set to our table. They were never suffered to choose their meat, but always made to eat such things as were provided for the family.

"Mornings they had always spoon-meat; sometimes on nights. But whatever they had, they were never permitted to eat at those meals of more than one thing; and of that sparingly enough. Drinking or eating between meals was never allowed, unless in case of sickness; which seldom happened. Nor were they suffered to go into the kitchen to ask anything of the servants when they were at meat; if it was known they did, they were certainly beat, and the servants severely reprimanded.

"At six, as soon as family prayers were over, they had their supper; at seven the maid washed them; and, beginning at the youngest, she undressed and got them all to bed by eight; at which time she left them in their several rooms awake—for there was no such thing allowed of in our house as sitting by a child till it fell asleep.

"They were so constantly used to eat and drink what was given them that, when any of them was ill, there was no difficulty in making them take the most unpleasant medicine; for they durst not refuse it, though some of them would presently throw it up. This I mention to show that a person may be taught to take anything, though it be never so much against his stomach.

"In order to form the minds of children, the first thing to be done is to conquer their will, and bring them to an obedient temper. To inform the understanding is a work of time, and must with children proceed by slow degrees as they are able to bear it; but subjecting the will is a thing that must be done at once, and the sooner the better. For, by neglecting timely correction, they will contract a stubbornness and obstinancy which is hardly ever after conquered; and never, without using such severity as would be as painful to me as to the child. In the esteem of the world they pass for kind and indulgent whom I call cruel parents, who permit their children to get habits which they know must be afterwards broken. Nay, some are so

stupidly fond as in sport to teach their children to do things which in a while after they have severely beaten them for doing. Whenever a child is corrected, it must be conquered; and this will be no hard matter to do if it be not grown headstrong by too much indulgence. And when the will of a child is totally subdued, and it is brought to revere and stand in awe of the parents, then a great many childish follies and inadvertences may be passed by. Some should be overlooked and taken no notice of, and others mildly reproved; but no wilful transgression ought ever to be forgiven children without chastisement, less or more, as the nature and circumstances of the offence require.

"I insist upon conquering the will of children betimes, because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example will be ineffectual. But when this is thoroughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents, till its own understanding comes to maturity, and the principles of religion have taken root in the mind.

"I cannot yet dismiss this subject. As self-will is the root of all sin and misery, so whatever cherishes this in children ensures their after-wretchedness and irreligion; whatever checks and mortifies it promotes their future happiness and piety. This is still more evident if we farther consider that religion is nothing else than the doing the will of God, and not our own; that, the one grand impediment to our temporal and eternal happiness being this self-will, no indulgences of it can be trivial, no denial unprofitable. Heaven or hell depends on this alone. So that the parent who studies to subdue it in his child works together with God in the renewing and saving a soul. The parent who indulges it does the devil's work, makes religion impracticable, salvation unattainable; and does all that in him lies to damn his child, soul and body, for ever.

"The children of this family were taught, as soon as they could speak, the Lord's Prayer, which they were made to say at rising and bed-time constantly; to which, as they grew bigger, were added a short prayer for their parents, and some collects, a short catechism, and some portions of Scripture, as their memories could bear.

"They were very early made to distinguish the Sabbath from other days, before they could well speak or go. They were as soon taught to be still at family prayers, and to ask a blessing immediately after, which they used to do by signs, before they could kneel or speak.

"They were quickly made to understand they might have nothing they cried for, and instructed to speak handsomely for what they

wanted. They were not suffered to ask even the lowest servant for aught without saying, 'Pray give me such a thing'; and the servant was chid if she ever let them omit that word. Taking God's name in vain, cursing and swearing, profaneness, obscenity, rude, ill-bred names, were never heard among them. Nor were they ever permitted to call each other by their proper names without the addition of Brother or Sister.

"None of them were taught to read till five years old, except Kezzy, in whose case I was overruled; and she was more years learning than any of the rest had been months. The way of teaching was this: the day before a child began to learn, the house was set in order, every one's work appointed them, and a charge given that none should come into the room from nine till twelve, or from two till five; which, you know, were our school hours. One day was allowed the child wherein to learn its letters; and each of them did in that time know all its letters, great and small, except Molly and Nancy, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly; for which I then thought them very dull; but since I have observed how long many children are learning the horn-book, I have changed my opinion. But the reason why I thought them so then was because the rest learned so readily; and your brother Samuel, who was the first child I ever taught, learned the alphabet in a few hours. He was five years old on the 10th of February; the next day he began to learn; and as soon as he knew the letters, began at the first chapter of Genesis. He was taught to spell the first verse, then to read it over and over, till he could read it off-hand without any hesitation; so on to the second, &c., till he took ten verses for a lesson, which he quickly did. Easter fell low that year; and by Whitsuntide he could read a chapter very well; for he read continually, and had such a prodigious memory that I cannot remember ever to have told him the same word twice.

"What was yet stranger, any word he had learned in his lesson he knew wherever he saw it, either in his Bible or any other book; by which means he learned very soon to read an English author well.

"The same method was observed with them all. As soon as they knew the letters, they were put first to spell, and read one line, then a verse; never leaving till perfect in their lesson, were it shorter or longer. So one or other continued reading at schooltime, without any intermission; and before we left school each child read what he had learned that morning; and, ere we parted in the afternoon, what they had learned that day.

"There was no such thing as loud talking or playing allowed of, but every one was kept close to their business, for the six hours of school:

and it is almost incredible what a child may be taught in a quarter of a year, by a vigorous application, if it have but a tolerable capacity and good health. Every one of these, Kezzy excepted, could read better in that time than the most of women can do as long as they live.

"Rising out of their places, or going out of the room, was not permitted unless for good cause; and running into the yard, garden, or street, without leave was always esteemed a capital offense.

"For some years we went on very well. Never were children in better order. Never were children better disposed to piety or in more subjection to their parents, till that fatal dispersion of them, after the fire, into several families. In these they were left at full liberty to converse with servants, which before they had always been restrained from; and to run abroad, and play with any children, good or bad. They soon learned to neglect a strict observation of the Sabbath, and got knowledge of several songs and bad things, which before they had no notion of. That civil behaviour which made them admired when at home by all which saw them was, in great measure, lost; and a clownish accent and many rude ways were learned, which were not reformed without some difficulty.

"When the house was rebuilt, and the children all brought home, we entered upon a strict reform; and then was begun the custom of singing psalms at beginning and leaving school, morning and evening. Then the oldest took the youngest that could speak, and the second the next, to whom they read the Psalms for the day, and a Chapter in the New Testament; as, in the morning, they were directed to read the Psalms and a chapter in the Old; after which they went to their private prayers, before they got their breakfast or came into the family. And, I thank God, this custom is still preserved among us.

"There were several by-laws observed among us, which slipped my memory, or else they had been inserted in their proper place, but I mention them here, because I think them useful.

"1. It had been observed that cowardice and fear of punishment often led children into lying, till they get a custom of it, which they cannot leave. To prevent this a law was made, That whoever was charged with a fault, of which they were guilty, if they would ingenuously confess it, and promise to amend, should not be beaten. This rule prevented a great deal of lying, and would have done more, if one in the family would have observed it. But he could not be prevailed on, and therefore was often imposed on by false colours and equivocations; which none would have used (except one), had they been kindly dealt with. And some, in spite of all, would always speak truth plainly.

"2. That no sinful action, as lying, pilfering, playing at church, or on the Lord's day, disobedience, quarrelling &c., should ever pass unpunished.

"3. That no child should ever be chid or beat twice for the same fault; and that, if they amended, they should never be upbraided with it afterwards.

"4. That every signal act of obedience, especially when it crossed upon their own inclinations, should be always commended, and frequently rewarded, according to the merits of the case.

"5. That if ever any child performed an act of obedience, or did anything with an intention to please, though the performance was not well, yet the obedience and intention should be kindly accepted; and the child with sweetness directed how to do better for the future.

"6. That propriety be inviolably preserved, and none suffered to invade the property of another in the smallest matter, though it were but of the value of a farthing or a pin; which they might not take from the owner without, much less against, his consent. The rule can never be too much inculcated on the minds of children; and from the want of parents or governors doing it as they ought, proceeds that shameful neglect of justice which we may observe in the world.

"7. That promises be strictly observed; and a gift once bestowed, and so the right passed away from the donor, be not resumed, but left to the disposal of him to whom it was given, unless it were conditional, and the condition of the obligation not performed.

"8. That no girl be taught to work till she can read very well; and then that she be kept to her work with the same application, and for the same time, that she was held to in reading. This rule also is much to be observed; for the putting children to learn sewing before they can read perfectly is the very reason why so few women can read fit to be heard, and never to be well understood."

Supplementing this general training, Susanna gave each child alone a certain period each week for spiritual culture; Charles' was on Saturday.

Thus was Charles Wesley brought up and educated along with five or six sisters and one brother. For two years he was the only boy at home. Susanna had him for the first eight years, one year longer than was specified by a famous Catholic, who said, "Give me a child until he is seven and I care not who has him afterward." Charles was not a special favorite of his father nor—like Samuel, the firstborn—of his mother. For John's welfare the mother became "peculiarly attentive" after his escape from the fire.

CHAPTER IV

London and Oxford

In an autobiographical letter Charles wrote: "At eight years old, I was sent by my father, rector of Epworth, to Westminster School [London], and placed under the care of my eldest brother Samuel, a strict churchman, who brought me up in his own principles. My brother John, five years older than me, was then at Charterhouse." [London].

Though brother Samuel was an under-officer, Charles was given no privileges but, like all the others, had to go through all the stern discipline of the school and the hazing of his fellow-students, of whom there were about four hundred. Samuel had not previously lived at home with Charles, but a warm mutual love developed. During Charles' most formative years, he was moulded not only in High Church principles but also in classical culture by this poetic, witty, and upright elder brother. At Westminster young Wesley was spritely, learned readily, but was "unlucky", that is, he was easily found out when in scrapes.

Strangely enough, he depreciated his courage and magnified his fearsomeness. Indeed only he can be courageous who knows fear. As a matter of fact, Charles became famed for his courage and also for his skill in fistic encounters. When, for example, a Scotch lad, James Murray, was bullied by the boys because of his Scotch burr and because his family were Jacobites and supported the Pretenders, Charles became James' champion and successfully fought his cause. In after years that same boy, as Lord Mansfield, became Chief Justice of England. The two renewed their early intimacy, the judge and poet often taking long walks together.

After five years at Westminster, Charles underwent a fierce competition, which was ended by twelve or more hours of grueling intellectual battle, and won thereby the much coveted honor of becoming a "King's scholar." Incidentally, Samuel likewise had been one when Charles was born. The Foundation bore the expense of such scholars. In 1721 Charles had been made "Captain" of the school and thus became the liaison between Master and boys—a highly honorable and responsible position of leadership. At Westminster School the students were required to go often to Westminster Abbey.

While at Westminster, Charles was called upon to make a crucial life decision. A wealthy Garrett Wesley of Ireland, having no children, had written father Samuel asking if he had a son named Charles, as he wanted to make one of that name his heir. The father apparently treated the suggestion hospitably and for a few years money was forthcoming for Charles' education. Then Garrett himself came on and interviewed the young man, liked him, and offered adoption with a rich heirship. Charles, not yet of age, referred the offer to his parents, who passed the decision back. After due deliberation Charles declined.

Garrett later got a Richard Colley to accept his offer and to change his name to Wesley. He became not only the father of the Earl of Mornington, a warm friend of Charles Wesley's sons, but also the father of Governor-General Wellesley of India and of Arthur Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington and conqueror of Napoleon. Indeed the Duke's name was sometimes written "Hon. Arthur Wesley." John Wesley later called Charles' decision "a fair escape."

At eighteen years of age, Charles was elected to Christ Church College, Oxford University, the college of which his great-grandfather, grandfather, father, and his two brothers were graduates. He obtained the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1730. He later got a Master's Degree and expected to become a tutor for life.

When he left Christ Church he had established a reputation of being among its very best students. He also was reputed to be a desirable friend since he was vivacious, cheerful, and affectionate. He was abrupt too, but somewhat reserved.

During the first year at Oxford, however, Charles allowed himself to be diverted by much frivolity. This is easily understandable after his release from the ten years' close supervision at Westminster. When brother John, now a Fellow in nearby Lincoln College, spoke to him about religion, he resented any attempt to limit his new freedom and exclaimed, "What would you have me to be—a saint all at once?"

But later, possibly after another visit from John, who meanwhile had gone to be his father's curate, Charles became studious and serious. He credited somebody's prayers for this change, "probably my mother's." About that time he escaped from a "calf-love" which had begun in the careless years with a designing actress who had a scheming mother, and he confessed to John.

"After all," wrote he, "I don't take her frailty much to heart, as I can without regret resolve never to change another word with the pretty creature, which I can the more easily refrain from, as my eyes were partly opened by my last saving journey to London; and I trust

I shall keep them open, and see clearer by it, all the days of my life. One benefit I am sure to get by the bargain; from henceforth . . . I shall be far less addicted to gallantry, and doing what sister Nutty with less justice said you did—liking women merely for being women . . . But enough of her [the actress]. I'll blot my brain and paper no longer with her."

The change showed also in his habits. Taking two others with him, he went weekly to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and tried to observe the methods of study prescribed by the University. Apparently at Oxford the regulations were more honored in the breach than in the observance, for their conduct was so unusual that they became objects of derision by their fellow students. One said of Charles and his associates, "Here is a new sect of Methodists springing up." "Methodists" almost immediately became their nickname. Charles, who was called this first, said it was because of their strict conformity to methods of study. John declared the name came from a class of Roman physicians who had advocated a strict regulation of diet and exercise; but his later definition of a Methodist was 'one living by Bible method.' In the seventeenth century the name had been used for several sects of Nonconformists. Whatever that first student had in mind, however, the name stuck.

By our present standards for educational institutions, Oxford of that day may be disparaged; but it did much for the Wesley brothers both in scholarship and in general development. In it they learned to be independent, to go against the current, and to develop leadership.

Charles with his companions formed the "Holy Club", Charles himself starting it. At first they were characterized mainly by going to the weekly Sacramental service and by helping one another in diligence, zeal, and in studies. When John returned from Epworth and Wroote, they, especially Charles, welcomed him and turned over the leadership to him. The Club developed. Its activities were self-examination and introspection, regularity in the study of the classics and the Bible, and personal religious devotion maintained by seasons of prayer and ejaculatory prayer. They fasted two days each week and followed other religious observances. They conversed on the things of God, shared what they had, and developed their ideal of holiness through self-denial and practical benevolence to the needy.

The members of the Club became known for their calmness even cheerfulness in the face of scorn and ridicule. This last was evidenced by the names by which they were called—"Godly Club", "Reforming Club", "Sacramentalists", "Bible Moths", "Bible Bigots", "Supererogation Men", "Enthusiasts", etc. The very names bore a

testimony, for they were trying by rigid attention to the Means of Grace to *earn* their spiritual salvation. This they followed almost to the point of fanaticism and of physical impairment.

William Morgan, a member of the Holy Club, called on a wife-murderer at the jail in Oxford, and led the Wesleys and the Holy Club to put prisons on their schedule. Samuel, Sr. gave his blessing to this work, saying he too had visited the jails when a student in Oxford. Thereafter all three members of the Holy Club who formed the "three-fold cord," followed the practice. After his ordination, George Whitefield made it his first act to read prayers to prisoners. Throughout their long lives, the Wesleys maintained the custom of ministering to prisoners at every opportunity.

This preparation for the work of itinerant evangelists seemed providential, for the Holy Club fostered a high degree of religious zeal and enthusiasm for the Christian Gospel. But what can be said of the Georgia interlude of a few months?

General James Oglethorpe's interest in those who had been imprisoned for small debts began with his activity on their behalf as a member of Parliament and subsequently led to their settlement under him, primarily for their welfare, in Georgia. Inasmuch as he had been quite a friend of the Wesley family and had helped Samuel, Sr., Oglethorpe was able to induce John to go out with his second lot of immigrants.

Foreign service was in the Wesley boys' blood. Grandfather John wanted to go to North or South America, and his wife's father took out a patent for a colony in Massachusetts. Father Samuel had offered himself as a missionary and later told Oglethorpe that, if younger, he would go to Georgia. Brother Samuel, Jr. had been greatly interested in the Georgia colony, even donating a Communion set for it. John persuaded also his self-deprecating younger brother Charles who records: "I took my degrees, and only thought of spending all my days in Oxford. But my brother, who always had the ascendant over me, persuaded me to accompany him and Mr. Oglethorpe to Georgia. I extremely dreaded entering into Holy Orders, but he overruled me here also and I was ordained."

They were on shipboard four months including delays in England. On shipboard the two Wesleys with Ingham, an Oxford Methodist, and Delamotte, one of John's devotees, set up and followed a rigorous routine which included a three-hour religious period while the recently ordained Charles wrote sermons. But at twenty-eight Charles was far from prepared for a pioneer life by his hitherto supervised and circumscribed life at Epworth, Westminster, and Oxford.

Further Preparation

Afer his arrival in Georgia Charles became insufferably homesick. This is revealed in an introspective letter written to Sally Kirkham Capone and Anne Granville, literary, religious, and personal friends in homes near Oxford. The letter included, along with spiritual messages, the following: "Besides you two, I have no relations, no friends in England whom I either write to or find any ease of thinking of. And for you I do pray continually." . . . "O that you both might profit by my loss and never know the misery of divided affections (one sentence erased) . . . I long to hear from you both . . . and that for this very plain reason that I may love you better. Nothing encourages our love like Prayer for each other . . . It is my greatest happiness to love you both for God's sake . . ."

Oglethorpe had provided also in his colony for some Protestant exiles from Germany who had escaped the Papal intolerance and cruelty shown there. These exiles adulterated helpfully the main body of immigrants, the "debtors" rescued from prisons. Some of these "Moravians" on shipboard as well as others at Savannah impressed both Wesleys by their meekness, devoutness, love, humility, peaceableness, heaven-mindedness, and calm faith when in danger. The colony was likewise enriched by a few hardy Scotchmen.

After five weeks with John in Savannah, which allowed further acquaintance with the Moravians, Charles went on to Frederica on St. Simon's Island. Though he had been sent out as Secretary to Oglethorpe and "Secretary for Indian Affairs", both he and John considered themselves as missionaries. Each had clergy duties, John at Savannah and Charles at Frederica. When the latter reached the place of his labors and realized he had his first parishioners, his spirit at once revived. "No sooner did I enter upon my ministry than God gave me, like Saul, another heart."

But pioneer Frederica was raw. Practically all were of the "debtor" class without the savoring salt of Moravians and Scotchmen as at Savannah. English laws on debtors were harsh; imprisonment for debt not only was unwise but could be cruel; even the gallows was the penalty for some. It is said that over four thousand per year were interned for debt in England and Wales; many died of prison neglect

or mistreatment. While many, like Samuel, Sr., were merely unfortunate in being thus imprisoned, those emigrating to Georgia included the lazy and quarrelsome, without character as well as without property or employment. Frederica's fifty poor families included too many of these. Besides, they had only palmetto huts and tents in which to exist while building a fort, laying out lots, and erecting crude habitations. Moreover, they were continuously unsettled by fear of imminent attacks by the Spaniards.

Charles, of course, was unused to such conditions and equally unfamiliar with that kind of human nature. Early he laid out a private "Myrtle Walk", which was to play such an important part in his life. He frequented it for solitude and private devotion. He took refuge in it from the immoral chaplain to the Independent Company whom he did not wish to meet because he was so discouraged by mistreatment. He took Mr. Oglethorpe and an accuser down this walk for a private interview. He and brother John frequently retired here, conversing in Latin and Greek to be doubly safe. And it was on this walk, at the height of his unpopularity, that he was all but grazed by a would-be assassin's bullet.

Like his brother in Savannah, he became unpopular at Frederica. Though they were assiduous in their duties as priests, their High Churchmanship was not winsome, nor were Holy Club practices and rules popular among pioneers. Their strictness regarding pleasures, Sabbath observance, and general morals went against the grain of such settlers. Tomo Chici, the Indian Chief, had sized up the settlers, for when approached by missionaries wanting to make Christians of the Indians, he exclaimed, "Why these are Christians at Savannah, these are Christians at Frederica! Christians much drink! Christians beat men! Christians tell lies! Devil Christians! Me no Christian"! Charles was discouraged also because so few came to the services.

Moreover, these preachers or "priests" had not as yet found themselves religiously. They still sought holiness by rigorous observances and sacerdotalism, by extreme "piety", by intellectual and physical agony. Charles' written sermons at Frederica were mainly tirades against worldly diversions which should be renounced, and exhortations to devote the whole self to God and to mortify man's hopelessly evil nature by fasting, prayer, and harsh self-denial.

He was very unhappy. By nature and by taste, he was unqualified for a Secretaryship. After only a fortnight on St. Simon's and less than a week as a Secretary, he wrote in his Journal, "I was wholly spent in writing letters for Mr. Oglethorpe. I would not spend six days more in the same manner for all Georgia." But he had to write

many more both at Frederica and at Savannah. No wonder Mr. Oglethorpe preferred as his amauensis the calm, painstaking, and more methodical John.

Charles' less than ten weeks in Frederica were surely distressing! Two women on shipboard coming to America had hypocritically interested John in their "spiritual welfare." One, capable of deceit and intrigue, was Mrs. Welch; the other, Mrs. Hawkins, wife of the surgeon who, apart from his wife, had a fairly good record in the colony. But she was a virago, ferocious and probably psychopathic.

These two—Mrs. Welch the "wilful blockhead" and Mrs. Hawkins, "the devil", as master mind,—conspired to break the influence of the Wesleys so they could have General Oglethorpe for themselves. They represented Charles to the General as encouraging the settlers to mutiny and sedition, and as spreading false reports of the General's moral practices. They accused both Charles and his brother of making love to them. On the other hand, they both "confessed" to Charles that they themselves had adulterous relations with Oglethorpe. Each, the General and the young priest, was misled. There ensued not only a coldness but almost an enmity of the General toward Charles; he made the latter's life almost intolerable by denying small but important comforts. He definitely refused Charles cooking utensils, even boards to lie on at night, leaving him to sleep on the bare ground in the hut. When Charles appropriated the old bedstead of a boatman who died from injuries inflicted by the bursting of a cannon, Oglethorpe had it taken from him and refused to have his men mend another for the parson.

Exhausted and made quite ill by physical and mental suffering, he sent colleague Ingham to Savannah for brother John. Even though Oglethorpe venerated him, John was only a partial success as a mediator. But he was able to break down Charles' independence which had led to a resolve to ask no more favors of the General, and a frank interview followed.

In a letter to John, Charles used two Greek words to describe the two women. John carelessly dropped the letter and then was induced by the person finding it to tell the meaning of these two words. This added fuel to the fire. When Charles learned of it later, he wrote in his diary: "His simplicity in telling what and who were meant by the two Greek words was 'outdoing his own outdoings'. Surely all of this will be sufficient to teach him a little of the wisdom of the serpent of which he seems as utterly void as his dear friend Mrs. H. is of the innocency of the dove." Meanwhile the open conversation, the confessions of Mrs. Welch, and danger from the

Spaniards cleared the air and restored good relations between Charles and the General. One development in these experiences showed Charles' practical psychology in demonstrating to Oglethorpe that the whole colony took its cue for its attitude from the latter's favor or disfavor.

Soon John and Charles exchanged fields of labor. John had no greater success at Frederica, indeed was almost killed in a murderous attack by Mrs. Hawkins. Later from Savannah he wrote Oglethorpe, "I find so little of the form or power of religion at Frederica that I am sincerely glad I am removed from it."

For a few weeks Charles had taken over his brother's clergy duties in Savannah, also doing some secretarial work. There he had Delamotte's companionship. They enjoyed together some of the primitive conditions, as Charles recorded it: "Between four and five this morning Mr. Delamotte and I went into the Savannah. We chose this hour for bathing both for the coolness and because the alligators were not stirring so soon. We heard them indeed snoring all around us; and one very early riser swam by within a few yards of us. On Friday morning we had hardly left our usual place of swimming, when we saw an alligator in possession of it. Once afterwards Mr. Delamotte was in great danger; for an alligator rose just behind him and pursued him to the land, whither he narrowly escaped."

On July 26, 1736, Charles left Georgia after Oglethorpe, for good reasons, declined to accept at once his resignation as Secretary. It had been an unhappy experience for him in Georgia. He had been ashamed of his involuntary feeling at Frederica when Ingham left him and he had exclaimed, "But woe is me, that I am still contrained to dwell with Meshech! I languished to bear him company, followed him with my eyes till out of sight, and then sunk into deeper dejection than I had known before." When he himself left Frederica, he said he was overjoyed at the deliverance from the furnace and not a little ashamed for being so. Later, when leaving Savannah and Georgia for England, he was surprised that he felt no more joy in leaving "such a scene of sorrows."

He had experienced physical privation, even persecution, contempt and public disgrace, uncongenial tasks and fruitless efforts, loneliness and perplexity; he had all but ruined a far from robust physique by hardships. But of necessity he was driven to a closer walk with God, earnest prayer and appreciation of the Scriptures for guidance, assurance, and comfort.

Both Wesleys had looked forward to missionary work among the Indians. In this they were disappointed, as also in the Indians!

John, before going out, had idealized them: "I hope to learn the true sense of the Gospel of Christ by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments to construe away the text; no vain philosophy to corrupt it; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders to soften its unpleasing truths. They have no party, no interest to serve, and are therefore fit to receive the Gospel in its simplicity. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do, the will of God." But he later records his disillusionment: "They are likewise all . . . gluttons, drunkards, thieves, dissemblers, liars. They are implacable, unmerciful, murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, murderers of their own children."

The Wesleys had come to America "to save their own souls, to live wholly to the glory of God." The first phrase did not mean anything exactly selfish, for they sought to help others. Nevertheless by their failure and disappointment, they were led of God to larger things.

Charles started to sail for England from Charleston; delayed there, he was greatly impressed by what he saw and heard of the seamy side of slavery. When at last they sailed, a leaky boat, short supplies and a dangerous storm led the crew to persuade "the beastly . . . lewd, drunken, quarrelsome fool" captain to turn aside and put into Boston for repairs and supplies. After Georgia, Massachusetts made quite an impression on this young cleric. "O happy country that cherishes neither flies, nor crocodiles, nor informers." As they entered Boston harbor, he wrote that the prospect was not only new "but beautiful beyond all I have ever seen." After a drive in the country in October a few days after his arrival, he wrote: "The temperate air, the clear rivulets, and the beautiful hills and dales, which we everywhere met with, seemed to present the very reverse of Georgia."

At first he was not taken for a clergyman. After donning clericals, however, he was accepted, preached six times, and assisted in the Sacrament on the next three Sundays. Then he fell seriously ill and was attended by several doctors, none of whom would take any fee. During his illness he had an overdose of Boston hospitality: "I am wearied with this hospitable people, they vex and tease me with their civilities. They do not suffer me to be alone. The clergy, too, who came from the country on a visit, drag me along with them when they return."

Still ill, he embarked for England, his illness continuing through a stormy and dangerous voyage.

He landed at last in England on Friday, December 3, 1736. Welcome by relatives and friends filled the time and made happy the first few weeks, while reports on Georgia kept him busy. A visit to

Oxford was soon followed by being chosen to present the Oxford Address to King George II with whom he dined the next day. Incidentally, he had two or three seemingly providential escapes from highwaymen. Following his habitual custom, he took advantage of an opportunity to explain the nature of the true religion, "No other than what you once labored after; till the gentleman swallowed up the Christian."

But all these experiences were only time-filling; the climactic preparation was yet to come, for any climax follows, of course, preparation. After comparative failure in Georgia with its humbling and dissatisfying effects, Charles partook of the Lord's Supper every Sunday and preached as often as his health permitted. His frequent sermons on "One thing needful" show his mind-bent and heart-longing. Proceeding May 1738, both he and John, who meanwhile had likewise returned to England, preached very affectingly on the Love of God. Charles, while speaking earnestly to all associated, was especially anxious and attentive to two of his sisters, Hetty and Kezia.

William Law had exerted quite an influence on both brothers by his "Serious Call" and "Christian Perfection". In spite of questionable points in his theology, he had deep spiritual power; but Charles' two interviews with him in the autumn of 1737 only increased dissatisfaction with himself. The Moravians, who had gained the admiration of both brothers on shipboard and in Georgia, now affected Charles by his extended interviews with Count Zinzendorf. But Peter Böhler had more to do with the spiritual developments in the case of both brothers; he convinced both of lack of saving faith. Charles especially came close to him as he taught him English and in return received religious impressions and advice.

This young Moravian, praying over Charles when ill, asked him, "Do you hope to be saved?"

"Yes."

"For what reason do you hope it?"

"Because I have used my best endeavors to serve God," explained Charles.

Böhler shook his head, and said no more. Charles thought him very uncharitable, saying in his heart, "What, are not my endeavors a sufficient ground of hope? Would he rob me of my endeavors? I have nothing else to trust to."

Böhler was a man of contagious faith, of simple but calm assurance, and of powerful personality. Writing Zinzendorf, he described the Wesleys: "Of faith in Jesus, they have no other idea than the generality of people have. They justify themselves; therefore they always take

it for granted that they believe already and would prove their faith by their works, and thus so plague and torment themselves that they are at heart very miserable." He effectively expounded to brother John this salvation by faith. It was not a new doctrine, as Charles says in his diary, "Who would believe our Church had been founded on this important article of justification by faith alone? I am astonished I should ever think this a new doctrine; especially while our Articles and Homilies stand unrepealed."

But faith, externalized by Rome and abused by penances and indulgences, called forth a Luther; now externalized by a State Church into mere ceremonies and rites, it called for the Wesleys. In their preparation Luther would naturally have a message for them—John, when he heard Luther's Preface to Romans read in Aldersgate, and Charles on another occasion. "I spent some hours this evening in private with Martin Luther, who was greatly blessed to me," wrote he, "especially his conclusion of the 2nd chapter [Epistle to Galatians]. I laboured, waited, and prayed to feel who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*."

Böhler had convinced John by Scripture and by witnesses that faith might be given in a moment. This caused a dispute when John discussed it with some friends and his brother. Charles did not agree, for he wrote that John's "obstinacy in favoring the contrary opinion drove me at last out of the room."

Charles was not only under deep mental distress and craving for satisfaction and rest; but he was, in April and May, very ill physically. His pleurisy and flux were greatly aggravated by a violent toothache. We may be amused by one of his attempted remedies—smoking tobacco! Apparently he did not have his father's habit as it "set me a-vomiting." But his illness was real and serious.

Both brothers were groping after a faith which is a personal trust and a reliance on God's goodness, not merely an intellectual assent to the Gospel nor a mere acceptance of its doctrines. Böhler increased their discontent, hunger, conviction, and hope. They sought even with groanings and tears. In this period of floundering, Böhler gave to John the advice: "Preach faith till you have it, and then because you have it, you will preach faith." Some may have moral scruples regarding the homiletics of the first clause but none will question the second. Charles also in this period exhorted Mr. Piers to "labor after that faith which he thinks I have, and I know I have not." Charles, though quite ill, found help in Böhler's prayers. He was moved in a chair, not to the comfortable Hutton home as first planned, but to the humble home of Mr. William Bray, "a poor ignorant mechanic,

who knows nothing but Christ; yet by knowing Him, knows and discerns all things."

No wonder Charles "believed" before John. The latter *reasoned* more; the poet *felt* more. Both had craved and sought for it. They visited one another and exchanged experiences. Regarding one visit by John, Charles says, "I forced him (as he forced me) to sing an hymn to Christ . . ." Many others also ministered to him in his mental and physical distress which became more acute in the days preceding Whitsunday, May 20, 1738, which he called "The Day of Pentecost."

The culmination came quickly: early that day he, John, and some friends sang a hymn to the Holy Ghost. Charles prayed much and earnestly. Then he heard a voice saying, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise, and believe, and thou shalt be healed of all thy infirmities." He thought it to be the voice of Mrs. Musgrove but was puzzled when he found she was not near. Soon Mr. Bray's sister confessed she had said the words but had been ordered by Christ to come and so say. Charles regarded them as a message from God. ". . . still the Spirit of God strove with my own and the evil spirit, till by degrees He chased away the darkness of my unbelief. I found myself convinced, I knew not how nor when . . ." "I now found myself at peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of loving Christ . . . I saw that by faith I stood; by the continual support of faith, which kept me from falling."

That was on Sunday. On Monday he and John prayed together; an old friend, calling, feared Charles "was running mad." On Tuesday, said he, "I began an hymn upon my conversion, but was persuaded to break off, for fear of pride. Mr. Bray encouraged me to proceed in spite of Satan. I prayed to Christ to stand by me, and finished the hymn."

On Wednesday night, May 24, 1738, came a crowning experience. "Towards ten," wrote Charles, "my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of our friends, and declared, 'I believe.' We sang the hymn with great joy, and parted with prayer." The hymn sung was the one written by Charles the day before and included the stanzas:

*"Where shall my wondering soul begin?
How shall I all to heaven aspire?
A slave redeem'd from death and sin,
A brand pluck'd from eternal fire,
How shall I equal triumphs raise,
Or sing my great Deliverer's praise?"*

*"O how shall I the goodness tell,
Father, which thou to me has show'd?
That I, a child of wrath and hell,
I should be call'd a Child of God,
Should know, should feel, my sins forgiven
Bless'd with this antepast of heaven!"*

What should be said of his "Day of Pentecost" and John's Aldersgate experience three days later (and, as we shall see in the next chapter, George Whitefield's many months before the Wesleys')?

There is no doubt of the reality and power of the change that came over them. Previously they were ineffective, or at least ordinary priests; afterwards they became flaming evangelists, who turned England upside-down. The significance of these "conversions" cannot be discounted. All said of them is true; something happened!

What? Again it would be difficult for us to put ourselves into the thinking of that century—their thinking. In that day and too much even by the Wesleys, it was believed that souls were saved by the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, plus works of mercy and benevolence—formalism, ceremonialism, and externality.

The Wesleys had tried to save their own souls by what they did in moral living, Bible reading, prayers, spiritual exercises, and service to the needy, even in going as missionaries. These became rigid observances, ascetic egotism, and barren legalism. In those days also, God was regarded as Absolute Law, an exacting Governor or as a vindictive Judge rather than as a God of love, a Father, a Redeemer, a Saviour. A man was a slave under bondage rather than a son, loved and companioned by a Father and Co-worker.

By the spiritual experience of the Wesleys, religion became for them personal rather than ecclesiastical; "whosoever" became not merely mankind in general but "me". Faith became not merely nor mainly creedal and theological but something experienced, a conscious personal fellowship, "a sure trust or confidence that *my* sins were forgiven and *I* was reconciled to God's favor."

Before they had been doing to *attain*; now they relaxed to *receive*. Before, God's favor was an end; now, it was a beginning. Before, "works" were done to get to God; now, they were done because God was with them. No longer were "works" a way to faith but the product of faith. Now religion became internal, no longer an external performance; "service" became self-expression. The "law" was written on the heart, not merely on tables of stone, nor merely in the Bible

and the rubrics. Religion was now a private transaction between the soul and God.

Observances no less, but now glowing with new interest; no longer a dull routine but with a warm heart. Anxious straining, "iron discipline driven by will", gave way to no less activity but accompanied now with joy, peace and confidence. No longer consciously "saving own souls", they became wholly absorbed in efforts to save others.

Instantaneous change? Yes and no. Out of a clear sky, unprecedented, unsought? No! Culmination after seeking, after spiritual strivings? Yes. The total experience must be taken into account, all previous convictions, desires, and efforts. The mind had been convinced; the heart caught up. What followed? Things were changed. True, both had their periods of depression and dullness of feeling; but these were only temporary.

"Conversion"? If from a life of immorality or of flagrant sins—No! If the culmination of an integration of a divided self, of mind and will, of head and heart, the attainment of a sought mental and spiritual harmony, the fusing of a divided person—Yes! No wonder Charles called it his "conversion". "As soon as I saw clearly the nature of saving faith and made it the standing topic of my preaching, God then began to work by my ministry as He never had done before." It released also the slumbering poetic prophetic strain.

Their self-deprecation puzzles many today. Sin is twofold, action and state, "sins" and "sin". The former implies personal guilt, immoral acts. Of coarse sins the Wesleys could not have been conscious; they accused themselves of the sins of the spirit rather than those of the body—unbelief, pride, levity, lack of faith, lack of humility, falling short of the ideal; "all have missed the mark and fallen short." It is hard for us to understand the eighteenth-century emphasis on "sin" as a state into which we are born; the depravity of human nature willy-nilly estranging us from God—and this on that century's background of conscious or subconscious acceptance of election and literal, eternal hell-fire. Much of the Wesleys' self-deprecation came from this. They probably also overemphasized their phases and phrases of deprecation in some utterances. Indeed John modified some in his later life.

Is their experience a pattern for us? Should we go through all they went through? We live in the twentieth century, not the eighteenth. "Sin" as an inherited state is not so emphasized today. Then "depravity" was overemphasized, possibly to give more glory to regeneration. Not so many now, as then, regard religion as external and impersonal; more accept religion as a personal relationship

directly with God. The 'way' is now regarded as more simple; we cannot comprehend their long-drawn-out perplexity and the complexity of their experience. Indeed some could not even then. In Böhler's letter to Zinzendorf occur these words: "Our mode of believing in the Saviour is so easy to Englishmen that they cannot reconcile themselves to it; if it were a little more artful, they would much sooner find their way into it." Others did not record similar long-continued agony and yet had the sought-for and attained experience—probably their father Samuel and many others.

Moreover, they did it for us: their final attainment is for many now just a beginning; their teaching is now generally accepted. It is part of our training, our heritage, if you please. It is a common experience in most churches in all quarters of the globe.

The Wesleys were now prepared to set England on fire with real religion, John with sermon and organizing genius, Charles with sermon and song.

The Three-Fold Cord

At this point it is necessary to digress for a little in order to introduce George Whitefield, whose close relationship through many years to both John and Charles Wesley is of greatest importance. Unfortunately, George Whitefield's contribution to Methodism has been obscured by the organizational genius of John Wesley and the hymns of Charles Wesley. The three, however, should be considered together; Charles often referred to them as "a three-fold cord which never shall be broken." Robert Southey says that, had the Wesleys never existed, George Whitefield would have given birth to Methodism. Julia Wedgewood in her *Life of John Wesley* avers that Whitefield, to the end of his life, was the representative of the Methodist movement in the eyes of the polite world.

Who was Whitefield? He was born in an English inn in late 1714; his father died when he was but two years old and his mother remarried but not "happily." He was brought up in the rough surroundings of an inn, where for a while he performed the most menial labors, and was even a "drawer" of ale. Naturally he companioned with "loose-livers."

In his boyhood he was a strange mixture; possibly the inheritance from the great-grandfather, a clergyman, struggled with the inheritance from his father, a wine merchant and innkeeper.

Of his youth he says: "I soon gave frequent proofs of an impudent temper. Lying, filthy talking, foolish jesting I was much addicted to even when very young. Sometimes I used to curse, if not swear. Stealing from my mother I thought no theft at all." But he used some of the proceeds of such thefts to give to the poor and to buy books on religion! He had periods of deep religious feelings, in which he even composed sermons. Early he displayed histrionic ability. At sixteen, he became quite religious by rigorous observances and self-denial.

At eighteen, he entered Oxford as a "servitor." Even before entering he had formed a favorable impression of the "Methodists" from hearsay; for the first twelve months there he observed them closely, even envied them when reviled, defended them and desired to be of them. When a pauper attempted suicide, George sent a poor "apple

woman" to inform Charles, that he might visit and minister to this unfortunate. Though George cautioned the woman not to say who sent her, she did; whereupon Charles invited George to breakfast. George naturally turned first to Charles; they were kindred spirits, —human, ardent, and sociable. Charles introduced him into the Holy Club; and his previous punctilious observances became extreme, almost to the point of fanaticism.

He tells the story of his conversion: Charles lent him a book, Scougal's *Life of God in the Soul of Man*, and ". . . though I had fasted, watched and prayed, and received the sacrament so long, yet I never knew what true religion was, till God sent me that excellent treatise by the hands of my never-to-be-forgotten friend" . . . "At my first reading it, I wondered what the author meant by saying 'that some falsely placed religion in going to church, doing hurt to no one, being constant in the duties of the closet and now and then reaching out their hands to give alms to their poor neighbors.' Alas, thought I, if this is not religion, what is? God soon showed me, for in reading a few lines further, that 'true religion was an union of the soul with God, and Christ formed within us', a ray of divine light was instantaneously darted in upon my soul; and from that moment, but not until then, did I know that I must be a new creature."

Thus through the instrumentality of Charles Wesley, he became a valuable trophy for the Kingdom of God. Of his first meeting with George, Charles wrote years later:

*"Can I the memorable day forget,
When first we by Divine appointment met?
Where undisturb'd the thoughtful student roves,
In search of truth, through academic groves;
A modest, pensive youth, who mused alone,
Industrious the frequented path to shun,
As Israelite without disguise or art,
I saw, I loved, I clasp'd him to my heart,
A stranger as my bosom-friend caress'd,
And unawares received an angel-guest."*

But George went through a "night of the soul"; he ate the worst food, deliberately clothed himself shabbily and exposed himself to cold. Further Lenten severities induced a serious illness; and then: "About the end of the seventh week, after having undergone innumerable buffetings of Satan and many months' inexpressible trials by night and day under the spirit of bondage, God was pleased at length

to remove the heavy load, to enable me to lay hold on His dear Son by a living faith; . . . After a long night of desertion and temptation the Star which I had seen at a distance before, began to appear again and the Day Star arose in my heart."

Whitefield, in his conversion or new birth or salvation by faith, instead of salvation by conduct, reached his experience three years before his older colleague Charles, who, as we saw, obtained it three days before his brother John, who was four-and-a-half years his senior.

But George, Charles, and John formed a great Gospel triumvirate. Charles spoke for all three when he wrote:

*"I would the precious time redeem,
And longer live for this alone,
To spend, and to be spent, for them
Who have not yet my Saviour known;
Fully on these my mission prove,
And only breathe, to breathe Thy love."*

George's humility made him hesitate to be ordained even though the Bishop, violating his own rule regarding age, sought him out instead of his seeking the Bishop. Whitefield shrank from it and, prostrate, prayed, "I am unfit to preach in Thy great Name. Send me not, Lord; send me not yet." But he was persuaded, and so prepared himself by fasting and prayer, including two hours on his knees in a field.

Meanwhile his colleagues, the Wesleys, had gone to Georgia, so he had to take charge of the Holy Club at Oxford. Then providentially he was called to preach and began a marvelous preaching career.

What did his hearers see in the pulpit? A slender young man of medium height, well-proportioned, very fair, with insignificant features, except for a violent squint in one eye caused by a nurse's negligence during an attack of measles. This led to a nickname, "Dr. Squintum". Otherwise his eyes were small but piercing; he was graceful in manner and inconspicuous in dress.

But what a preacher! He soon had all London agog over the "boy parson", drawing great crowds. Since he was only twenty-two, we are not surprised at his dream of being a Bishop; but his humility saved him from being "split on that most dangerous of all rocks—worldly ambition," for he became greater than any Bishop.

Two strands of the threefold cord now drew him to America; Charles and John both so urged and his warm heart responded. Leaving his phenomenal success in England, he embarked as a mis

sionary to Georgia in 1738. In Savannah where he first labored he was as popular as John Wesley had been unpopular. After he had been only a few months in America, his obsession for an Orphan's House began its ferment, a plan for which had been drawn up by Charles Wesley. Of his remarkable success, both in preaching and money-raising, more later. Meanwhile let us summarize his activities.

He made seven trips to America, crossing the Atlantic thirteen times (the Wesleys only twice). This was no mean feat in itself, for few vessels were above fifty tons. They were mere cockleshells in a great ocean, completely dependent on the winds. His trips took from four to eleven weeks. He was at sea 732 days all told. Moreover, vessels were in constant danger from war and piracy, and often they suffered from a shortage of provisions and drinking water. Thus he recounts one experience: "Our food by no means enough to support nature—an ounce or two of salt beef, a pint of water, and a cake made of flour and skimmings of the pot." And of the same voyage he writes, "We have been on board just nine weeks and three days . . . My clothes have not been off (except to change me) all the passage. Part of the time I lay on open deck, part on a chest."

He became a traveling evangelist—a "Gospel rover," as he called himself. In America he ranged throughout Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and New England, having his greatest triumphs in Philadelphia and Boston, which he visited many times. Between trips to America, he traveled widely over England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Everywhere, both in Britain and America, he had striking success with big audiences. There had been nothing like it before, nor has there been since.

His industry knew no limit. In the thirty-four years of his active life, he preached eighteen thousand sermons, an average of ten a week. On the last week of 1738 he preached or expounded twenty-seven times. Once in America while traveling, he preached one hundred and seventy-five sermons and raised £700 in seventy-five days.

His trips to America came at a critical time in the life of that colony. He inspired the churches to new life and prepared the way for Wesley's itinerants. It should be specially noted that his brief visits were usually followed by revivals. On his second voyage to America he landed at Lewes, Delaware, where he organized the first Methodist Society in America in 1739.

The Wesleys returned from Georgia about the same time that George went there. They had their May 1738 "conversions" and then went about preaching, for which they soon found that George's earlier

preaching had prepared the way and gained attention and hearing for them.

Let us now trace the vicissitudes of the "threefold cord." Before going to America, George had consulted with his close friend, Charles, regarding his further ordination. On George's return from America in December, 1738, the Wesleys hastened to greet him and they "took sweet counsel" together. A few weeks later, after a few days of preaching and communing, they, with about sixty others, on New Year's eve, held a Watch Night Service in a Moravian meeting house on Fetter Lane, where the Wesleys worshiped. After prolonged prayer, about three o'clock, the spirit came upon them, so filling them with joy, amazement, and awe that they broke out into singing the *Te Deum*. A few days later, a smaller company in a similar meeting received a "full conviction that God was about to do great things" among them.

They were close together but soon came two developments, one drawing them closer and one disrupting the fellowship.

George initiated the work at Bristol, which became a great Methodist center. Just outside Bristol were the mines of Kingswood. The colliers were known as howling, bloody savages, violently brutal ruffians, lawless and law-defying. It was said of Whitefield's trip abroad, "If he would convert the heathen, let him try his hand on the Kingswood colliers." He accepted the challenge. The nearest parish church was over three miles away and too small to accommodate even a fraction of them—if they would go—as, of course, they did not. They could not be reached by a church; the only way was to take the Gospel where they were. George first began to speak to the miners as they came out of the pits; from this grew preaching to great crowds of them in the open air (contrary to the Church's tradition and rules). They responded and were moved, their tears making gutters down their grimy cheeks.

He soon invited John Wesley to help him. In spite of some "lots" drawn and opposition, John responded and on April 2, 1739, preached his first sermon in the open air. It was not without misgivings, of course. "I could scarce reconcile myself at first," said he, "to this strange way of preaching in the fields; having been all my life, till very lately, so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should regard the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church." But he "submitted to be more vile," reasoning that Christ's Sermon on the Mount was not in a church. Though he, Charles, and George had preached on shipboard and outside of a church in Georgia, he had some qualms as to its legality in England.

April 2, 1739, is a great day in Methodism, beginning a custom which made Methodism possible. They drifted into the practice not by design but because of external developments. The pulpits were closed to them, thrusting them out. The unchurched, unsaved masses, the poor, England's largest group, called to them. These masses would not go into churches even if sufficiently available. Souls, however, must be saved. The Gospel message had to be preached. How could it be brought to them? They were accustomed to gather in great crowds in fields or parks for sport and recreation. That was obviously the only way.

Yes, field preaching made Methodism; it became Methodism's chief avenue. As the *Cambridge Modern History* says, "It began a new era in the religious history of England." In 1739, the first year of this new era, John Wesley delivered only eight of his 500 sermons in church buildings.

John went into it reluctantly. Charles naturally held back longer. But nearly two months after John took the plunge, Charles followed and preached twice in quiet fields near London. He was beside George Whitefield when George once preached outdoors. When he saw the effects he exclaimed: "What has Satan gained by turning him out of the churches?"

Urged by George, Charles preached to a large open-air crowd at Moorfields, London, on Sunday, June 24, but only after a fierce fight with himself. "My inward conflict continued," said he, "I perceived it was the fear of man and that by preaching in the field next Sunday, as George Whitefield urges me, I shall break down the bridge and become desperate." Then, alone, he prayed long and earnestly, offering up friends, liberty, life itself for the sake of Christ and the Gospel. The next day, Sunday, "I prayed . . . and went forth in the name of Jesus. I found near ten thousand helpless sinners waiting for the word in Moorfields. I invited them in my Master's words as well as name, 'Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' The Lord was with me, even me, his meanest messenger according to His promise."

Charles now was committed. He knew to whom to give credit; he wrote, "I preached from George Whitefield's pulpit—the wall. . . ." Yes, the young intrepid, impetuous, consecrated George had pioneered in what was Methodism's great departure, which he himself characterized as a "mad trick." He led, almost forced, the hesitating Wesleys to follow him in it. Bishop Francis J. McConnell says John "advanced walking backwards."

But while they thus advanced together, another force was driving

them apart. This was the issue of Election or Predestination versus Free Grace. The Church of England averred Election in one of its Articles. Whitefield was reared in it. His faith was reinforced by contact with Scottish Presbyterians, and with those of New England where it was generally believed and by the letters of some of his close colleagues. We are surprised today that George could write as he did: "I believe the doctrine of reprobation in this view, that God intends to give saving grace, through Jesus Christ, only to a certain number; and that the rest of mankind, after the Fall of Adam, being justly left of God to continue in sin, will at last suffer that eternal death, which is its proper wages." But George was not a theologian or a logician, and the majority then was with him. This view is raw Calvinism.

The Wesleys held unswervingly to the doctrine of free grace for all, generally called Arminianism. They probably imbibed it at the Epworth rectory. As early as 1725 their mother wrote her views to John at Oxford when he was rebelling against Predestination, which he said meant that "a vast majority of the world were only born to eternal death, without so much as a possibility of avoiding it."

The inevitable clash came! History of such isms repeated itself. John did not want to dispute about it, but a "lot", drawn with four options, read "Preach and Print." Accordingly on April 29, 1739, he preached his famous sermon on "Free Grace." Three months after their joint open-air debut, George wrote John, "I would willingly wash your feet" and 'May you increase though I decrease,' but at the same time asked him not to publish his sermon. George sailed for America next month, and John did publish the sermon. It was damning indictment and thorough devastation of Calvinism, Election or Predestination. Published with it was a thirty-six stanza "Hymn on Universal Redemption" by Charles, of which these give its tenor:

*"A power to choose, a will to obey
Freely His grace restores;
We all may find the living way
And call the Saviour ours.*

*"Horror to think that God is hate!
Fury in God can dwell!
God could a helpless world create
To thrust them into Hell!*

*"Down there an endless death to die,
From which they could not flee—*

*No, Lord! Thine inmost bowels cry
Against the dire decree!"*

Many letters were exchanged between the Wesleys and Whitefield in 1740. In March George said that he was "10,000 times more convinced of the doctrine of election" but exhorted, "Let us offer salvation freely to all." Professor Caleb Winchester of Wesleyan University says in his *John Wesley* that, no matter how Calvinistic a man's theology, he has to be Arminian to be an evangelist.

In May George wrote "out of love" that he dreaded to come to England on account of the warmth of the controversy and also to have John come to America to disturb the work there. The next month, protesting he would rather die than see a division between them, he again asked John to be silent on the subject. John replied that there were bigots on both sides. The same month George wrote: "I cannot bear the thought of opposing you; but how can I avoid it, if you go about, as your brother Charles once said, to drive John Calvin out of Bristol." A few months later he declared that he did not wish to oppose him and hoped there might be harmony and very intimate union: "Yet it cannot be since you hold universal redemption."

Events moved fast. Having secured a copy of John's sermon and Charles' hymn, he wrote an answer the day before Christmas. A copy came to England where it was published without his consent. Copies of this answer were distributed at the Foundery door. John publicly tore up his copy, asking others to do the same, declaring Whitefield himself would do so if he were present.

En route home in February, 1741, George wrote Charles to whom he always felt nearer and whose verses cut him more deeply than John's sermon: "My dear, dear brother, why did you throw out the bone of contention? Why did you print that sermon against predestination? Why did *you* in particular, affix your hymn?"

George arrived in England on March 11. In a few days he and Charles met, wept together, and prayed that the breach might be prevented. A copy of George's reply to John was submitted to Charles, who returned it endorsed "Put up thy sword in its sheath." Charles, however, was compelled to write his brother that George's "fair words are not to be trusted to, for his actions show most unfriendly." On March 25 George says it is the most cutting of all, that he must separate from "my dear old friends" on account of differing in principles and yet "whom I still love as my own soul."

The controversy waxed warmer. George declared that they preached two different Gospels and that he could no longer give them the right

hand of fellowship. Contrary to his promise, he preached against them by name and, when invited by the Wesleys to preach at the Foundery, even with Charles by his side, he talked raw predestination most offensively. Whitefield was impetuous; his manner alienated.

Followers on each side were less charitable than the leaders and widened the breach. A "tabernacle" was erected for Whitefield near the Foundery.

To care adequately for the multitudes who crowded upon them, Whitefield began to use lay preachers. Thus he again pioneered and set the Wesleys an example. This was his second "first" in Methodism's two great features; the other was preaching in the open air.

Meanwhile Charles had to bear much of the brunt of the controversy directly. Cennick, who was at first Charles' protégé and whose hymns Charles had revised, had been appointed by John as headmaster of the Kingswood School. This school was conceived and begun by Whitefield, but John had administered and developed it into a Methodist center and made it his pet project,—even as Whitefield had developed the orphanage in Georgia planned by Charles. The latter got along with Howell Harris of Wales, a Calvinist, because in both men love was superior to differences. Not so with Cennick. Though at first he agreed with Charles against predestination, he switched and became a wild partisan. He accused Charles of being pro-predestination and, when that was shown to be absurd, said that Charles had misled and moulded John on it. Charles, for many months had to cope with the issue directly; indeed it caused him a serious illness. Of Cennick, he said at one time that, when his brother John had made Cennick head of the school, he had set the wolf to care for the sheep.

It is difficult for us to connect the Cennick of this controversy with the author of the hymns, "Jesus my all", "Children of the Heavenly King," and the two "Graces": "Be present at our table, Lord," and "We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food." But Cennick became so contentious that John and Charles had to expel him and his followers, not for their views *but for their contentiousness*. Cennick misled and inflamed Whitefield; together they established a rival institution in Kingswood.

But the three principals of the threefold cord were held together personally by love, good intentions, and a knowledge of each other's sincerity; also by the common opposition and their common task—leading men to Christ.

Here let us digress to consider another figure of considerable con-

sequence in the struggle and its outcome. Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, was left a widow at thirty-nine by a worthy Earl who also bequeathed her a liberal income. Three of her "highbrow" sisters were among the early Methodists. She had been converted through the Wesleys but was most attracted by Whitefield, whom she made her private chaplain and for whose followers she build many proprietary chapels.

Whitefield preached in her mansion to aristocratic audiences—the titled, the rich, and the great. While this was gratifying to the former pot-boy and though there were some evidences of sycophany, he nevertheless survived and served.

John, too, preached in her house, but he always had almost a contempt for the great. He and the Lady were never close but drifted farther apart. Perhaps they had too much the same kind of talents and temperament. Charles, ever more intimate with Whitefield, was closer to Lady Huntingdon, preached often in her house, corresponded with her, and named his daughter Selina after her. But when she went with Calvinism and Whitefield, establishing a College in Wales to train preachers of that persuasion, and especially when she attacked his brother, loyalty to John as well as his own convictions made Charles cool toward her. Admittedly, her service to the Predestination cause was extensive and valuable.

The break in the threefold cord did not long continue. In a few months, Whitefield wrote: "Brother Charles has been pleased to come and see me twice. Behold what a happy thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." John, meanwhile, had expressed his desire to "join hands" and to "let controversy die."

Two years after the break, unchanged but loving Charles wrote a poem on George:

*"Whitefield begins his course, and rises fair,
And shoots and glitters like a blazing star,
He lets his light on all impartial shine,
And strenuously asserts the birth divine,
While thousands listen to th' alarming song,
And conviction darted from his tongue."*

*"O had he kept the post by Heaven assign'd
Sent to invite and waken all mankind!
O had he 'scaped that plague, that deadly draught
Which rigid Calvin from old Dominic caught!"*

*"No, while the breath of God these limbs sustains
Or flows one drop of blood within these veins,
War, endless war, with Satan's scheme I make,
Full vengeance on the hellish doctrine take,
Its sworn eternal foe for my own Whitefield's sake."*

The attitude of all three, as it emerged, was, how to differ widely but to love one another. Further developments set an example of how to be united in action when differing theologically or when centrifugal forces of intellectual disagreement disrupted their fellowship. While attempts at formal union failed, they agreed to disagree and to respect each other's opinions. John did not see why there might not be in the same society some believing in particular redemption and some believing in general redemption.

Before the 1740's closed, the Wesleys were warning their preachers to guard against speaking in public against any opinions especially about Predestination. Charles wrote: "George Whitefield, my brother and I are one; a threefold cord, which shall no more be broken." In the 1750's Charles said, "The strife is past" and told George of his great love, regretting differences of opinion; and John wrote in his diary, "Mr. Whitefield called upon me. Disruptings are no more. We love one another and join hand in hand to promote the cause of our common Master." While Whitefield was rebuilding the Tabernacle near the Foundery, the Wesleys gave him the use of their Chapels in London, so that soon they were preaching together and exchanging pulpits. George charged his people never to leave the Methodists.

In the next decade, their frequent correspondence evinced great love and mutual interest, and they conferred frequently. Charles wrote again with a slight amendment, "The threefold cord, we trust, shall never more be broken."

Bigotry is said to have melted away before Whitefield. When a captious Calvinist asked him if he expected to see John Wesley in heaven, George replied, "I fear not; he will be so near the throne and we shall be at such a distance that we shall hardly get a sight of him".

In George's will he left a mourning ring "to my honored and dear friends and disinterested fellow-laborers, the Rev. Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them, in heart and Christian affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine." Charles wept when he heard of George's death and poured out his soul in a long elegy in which he pays tribute to Whitefield's power:

*"Roused from the sleep of death, a countless crowd,
(Whose hearts like trees before the wind are bow'd,
As a thick cloud that darkens all the sky
As flocking doves that to their window fly)
Press to the hallow'd courts, with eager strife,
Catch the convincing word, and hear for life . . .*

*Pricked at the heart, with one consent inquire,
'What must we do t'escape the never-dying fire?'*

*Love irresistible they could not bear,
Or stand against the torrent of his prayer . . ."*

George Whitefield was a remarkable combination. He was ardent like Charles and "made for friendship"; he was emotional, impetuous, sometimes irritable but soon repentant and apologetic; courageous, even intrepid before and during many persecutions, both physical and epistolary. As before intimated, he was very active, notably zealous, sometimes too much so, as he himself once recognized, for he wrote, "I have been too bitter in my zeal. Wild-fire has been mixed with it; and I frequently wrote and spoke in my own spirit, when I thought I was writing and speaking by the assistance of the Spirit of God." Occasionally his vanity broke through, but usually humility was uppermost.

He was less cultured and less scholarly than Charles or John but was more effective with all classes. As a preacher, he appealed to rough colliers as well as to the titled and the learned.

Though a loyal clergyman of the Church of England, he was not an ecclesiast but an evangelist. He was of a catholic spirit, loving all men.

Such a remarkable man is entitled to one blind spot. This should not be surprising, considering the times and circumstances and his tendency to respond to surroundings. Whitefield joined in the effort to repeal the anti-slavery provision for Georgia. He accepted slaves to work at his Georgia Orphan House, bought slaves for it, and bequeathed fifty slaves with it. Unlike Charles, he dwelt on the brighter side of slavery and used the Scriptures to bolster his case. His arguments from Old Testament practice should be considered from the viewpoint of the times, when literary and historical study had not yet made distinctions in the relative weight of immature and progressive developments.

Wherein was the wonderful power of his sermons?

He talked about God as an awful Judge and about eternal punish-

ment, but his terrors were not gloomy; on the contrary, he presented even more strongly the tenderness and love of God.

Though he preached over eighteen thousand times, he did not preach eighteen thousand sermons. An Evangelist, like a Bishop, can make a few sermons go far. Benjamin Franklin said itinerant preachers have a great advantage over stationary preachers—the former can improve by many rehearsals—and he commented on how Whitefield improved by repetition. The same sermon is reported to have been preached sixty to eighty times. But his sermon, seldom written, were kept fresh by constant adaptation to audiences or current events or to the latest book written and also by extempore bursts of passion.

Whitefield was very eloquent, combining beautiful modulation of voice with grace of manner. David Garrick, the great actor, went to hear him often and claimed that Whitefield could make audiences weep or tremble by changes in his pronunciation of "Mesopotamia"; and it is reported that he said he would give one hundred guineas to be able to say "Oh" like the preacher. Popular but refined wit and humor added spice to this histrionic ability. The whole man—voice, face, body, and gestures—preached: the man went inseparably with the sermons. That is why his printed sermons were so few and seemed mediocre. Once, when asked if a certain sermon might be published, he replied, "I have no objection, if you will print the lightning, thunder, and rainbow with it." A shipbuilder said about his preaching: "Sir, every Sunday that I go to my parish church I can build a ship from stem to stern under the sermon; but, were it to save my soul, under Mr. Whitefield I could not lay a single plank." Men had to listen. He had that strange power that was also in Charles Wesley, of making each hearer think he was addressing him individually.

Benjamin Franklin tells his personal experience with him in connection with his appeal for money for his philanthropic enterprises in England and in America: "I happened, soon after," says Franklin, "to attend one of his sermons in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften and concluded to give the copper; another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all."

And his dramatic power! Lord Chesterfield listened spellbound in the Countess of Huntingdon's parlor as he described a blind man

coming toward a deep precipice, and was so swayed that he leaped up at the critical stage and cried, "By God, he's over!" On another occasion Whitefield concluded: "The attendant angel is about to leave us and to return to heaven. Shall he ascend and not bear the news of one sinner reclaimed?" Then looking upward, he stamped his foot and cried: "Stop, Gabriel, stop, ere you enter the sacred portal, and yet carry with you the tidings of one sinner saved." He could, as one biographer says, almost persuade the audience that they saw angels hovering overhead and heard the lost clanking their chains below. At times his spirit would make sallies as if it escaped the body. George Whitefield put his whole self into every sermon,—so much so that toward the last he had a chronic "vomiting of blood" after the excitement of preaching.

True he was, or could have been, a great actor, but in preaching he was not acting; his vivid imagination and his personal experience made all real; he saw and felt as he spoke. Yes, the secret of his power and success, as it was of the Wesleys, was in his sincerity; he believed what he preached. And what a message!

As a result of Whitefield's endorsement of Calvinism, Methodism early separated into two streams, Calvinist Methodism and Arminian Methodism. The latter got its entity and focus from the Wesleys—from John's sermons and administrative genius, and from Charles' sermons and hymns.

What was Whitefield's service? All England was stirred as he ranged about. His followers divided into three groups—The Lady Huntingdon connexion, the Whitefield Methodists, and the Welsh Calvinist Methodists. The first group mainly merged into the Church of England, leavening it; the second went some with the Church of England but mostly became Congregational; the last is still a strong entity. Thus he furthered the evangelical movement in the Church of England; he peculiarly aroused and put new life into the Presbyterians of Scotland; and he made the various dissenting bodies in England feel his throb even to this day—to say nothing regarding the effect of his ministry upon Methodism. His diffused service to Great Britain is beyond estimate.

Similarly his work throughout the length of America at a critical time renewed and spread revivals; inspired existing churches to new force; founded new Congregational Churches; established Presbyterianism, making it evangelical and aggressive; rallied Baptist enterprises; and blazed a trail for Wesleyan preachers. As a result of his religious work Benjamin Franklin said: "From being thoughtless and

indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious."

Several colleges in America gratefully recall his interest. In early days, for example, he helped the furtherance of Dartmouth's welfare and, when Harvard's library burned, he secured fresh gifts for it from England. He also helped directly Tennant's "Log College" at Neshaminy, Pennsylvania; when it was moved to Princeton, New Jersey, Whitefield was honored by a Master of Arts degree. A memorial, standing on the site of the old Log College at Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, lists fifty-one colleges in America deriving from Whitefield's work.

Benjamin Franklin raised the money and started an academy in Philadelphia, buying George Whitefield's "Preaching House" for it. George imposed three conditions: (1) the debt should be paid; (2) the large hall should be retained for public worship; (3) a free school should be maintained for needy children. Thus Whitefield's "Preaching Place" became the first building of the University of Pennsylvania. On its present campus he is memorialized by a statue.

So an English pot-boy—led to a religious experience by Charles Wesley even before he experienced it himself, introduced into the Holy Club by Charles, and remaining close to his introducer throughout life—became, under God, a medium of great service to real religion. Though his influence was diffused through many denominations, it was at least as great as that of the Wesleys in the development of Methodism.

The Trio and Women

We seem to digress to talk about women, but no book of this kind would be complete without such. George, the youngest leader, was the first to be "converted" and the first to be married. George Whitefield resembled John Wesley in at least three particulars: his awkward way in courtship, his ideas of a wife's place, and his putting the claims of religion above the claims of the flesh, indeed above all else. Charles differed from them on the first two but felt no conflict on the third.

At twenty-five years of age in Savannah, George felt the need for a helpmeet in his growing work. So he wrote a cold-blooded letter to the parents of a young lady in England, enclosing a letter also to her. He asked leave of the parents to propose, adding, "You need not be afraid of sending me a refusal; for I bless God, if I know anything of my own heart, I am free from that foolish passion which the world calls *love*. I write, only because I believe it is the will of God that I should alter my state." (By the way, in a letter to Charles in 1755, John cynically or facetiously remarked, "Love is rot"; already he had known differently).

In the proposal letter Whitefield asked the young lady: "Can you undertake to help a husband in the charge of a family, consisting perhaps of a hundred persons? Can you bear the inclemencies of the air, both as to cold and heat, in a foreign climate? Can you, when you have a husband, be as though you had none, and willing to part with him even for a long season, when his Lord and Master shall call him forth to preach the Gospel, and command him to leave you behind? . . . I desire to take you, my sister, to wife not for lust, but uprightly . . . The passionate expressions which carnal creatures use, I think, ought to be avoided by those that would marry in the Lord. I can only promise, by the help of God, to keep my matrimonial vows." The young lady, supposed to be Elizabeth Delamotte, whose brother had accompanied the Wesleys to Georgia, of course did not consent. George decided she was religiously immature.

A little over a year afterwards, when nearly twenty-seven, he married in Wales Mrs. Burnells James, a widow ten years his senior, whom he described as "neither rich nor beautiful, once gay but now

a true child of God." She traveled occasionally with him, though some say that the marriage was unhappy and that his mind was "set at liberty" by her death in 1768. George had announced, when she was pregnant, that the child was to be a boy and would become a preacher. He was quite happy when his son was born in October, 1743, but was broken-hearted when the boy died early in the next February. True he preached three times between the death and the funeral, but ever after there was a note of wistfulness in some of his sermons, especially the one on Abraham offering up Isaac. No doubt Charles, nearer to him than John, suffered sympathetically.

The Wesleys, although of small stature, some way had an appeal which compensated. James Hutton, their friend of many years, says, "Both John and Charles Wesley are dangerous snares to many young women. Several are in love with them. I wish they were married to some good sister, though I would not give them one of mine, even if I had many . . . At Bristol the souls are wholly under Charles Wesley."

One of John's rationalizations regarding marriage was to ward off other women and to protect himself and them from scandals. But Charles' nature was different from John's; no one advised the latter to marry. Oglethorpe, a keen reader of men, said to Charles as he was leaving Georgia, "On many accounts I should recommend to you marriage, rather than celibacy. You are of the social temper, and would find in a married state the difficulties of working out your salvation exceedingly lessened, and your helps as much increased." Later George Whitefield also so advised him.

Like John, he too became somewhat involved with the Kirkhams and Granvilles. (See later regarding John's experiences). He wrote John some years after Sally Kirkham's marriage:

"Indeed, I durst on no account trust myself there [Stanton] without you, for as I take it strong pleasure would be dangerous to one in my unconfirmed condition . . . 'Tis well you at last own Sally not infallible—though she is so, I verily believe, for all your suspicion; all the business is, she has not changed but Chapoon is Chapoon still!"

Apparently this friendship inspired one of his first-known hymns. Anne Granville in 1731 found it "quite charming."

Charles wrote that homesick letter on his first arrival in Georgia, not to his mother nor to his sisters, but to "Varanese," now married to Chapone, and to Anne Granville.

At the first opportunity on his return from America in the winter of 1736, he visited the Granville sisters and later Stanton, where they were "overjoyed to see me, especially my first of friends, Varanese." John, to a much greater extent than Charles, had correspondence with

women but Charles had some too. This was dangerous. For instance a friend of the deaf but keen and innocent Miss Hutton did not approve of the voluminous spiritual correspondence of her friend with Charles.

Charles had cut his eye teeth on women at Oxford. When nearly forty years of age, Charles decided that, if he ever should get married, the sooner the better. Providence seemed good to him for, on August 28, 1747, he met Mr. Gwynne, of Garth, with two of his children, one of whom was Sally, not yet twenty-two years of age. She and Charles were at least mutually interested on first sight.

Squire Gwynne was pious, kind to his tenants, and beneficent to the poor. His establishment was large, housing nine children, twenty servants, a private Chaplain, and usually ten to fifteen guests. He had become interested in Methodism by hearing Howell Harris, whose evangelical experience antedated even George Whitefield's. His wife, at first opposed to Methodism, was won over by observing Charles' character, by hearing him, and by reading one of John's publications. She was a woman of character, intelligence, and hard-headed business sense with a prevailing influence over her husband.

Charles was often at Garth and preached there frequently. Once Mr. Gwynne and Sally traveled with him to Bristol and Kingswood; then they spent a while at the Foundery in London. Together they journeyed to and about Oxford, becoming well acquainted with one another and she with his work.

Of great significance for the little love-archer were the periods of Charles' illness at Garth, when Sally tenderly nursed him.

In spite of the difference in their ages, they apparently came to a private understanding; but some hurdles had to be negotiated before there could be a formal proposal. First was his brother's consent; he and John had promised each other that neither would marry or take any steps toward marriage without the other's knowledge and consent. Charles got John's and also the unhesitating approval of other leading Methodists, including George Whitefield, Vicar Perronet, and several Societies. The parents' consent, at least the mother's, had to be secured. The forty-year-old bachelor was afraid to approach her, but Sally and he persuaded her sister to communicate for them. The result was that the mother heartily, even enthusiastically, agreed.

Mrs. Gwynne had been an heiress to £30,000. Charles had no parish, had only a small income, was practically penniless. After some negotiations the mother was satisfied with a promise of £100 a year from the profits of the bookroom. Even at that time John said Charles Wesley's hymns alone brought in about £200 a year.

Thus Sally passed from comparative comfort to a home of almost poverty. Mrs. Gwynne wanted him to agree not to go again to Ireland; but Sally would not hear to such a limitation and even said she would not curtail his itinerating in any way nor interfere with his diet.

They were married by his brother John on Saturday April 8, 1749. Sang the happy bridegroom:

*"Sweet day! so cool, so calm, so bright
The bridal of the earth and sky."*

At the altar they sang a hymn of ten stanzas, two of which were:

*"Sweetly in the midst appear
With thy chosen followers here;
Grant us the peculiar grace
Show to all thy glorious face.*

*"Raise our hearts to things on high
To our Bridegroom in the sky;
Heaven our hope, and highest aim,
Mystic marriage of the Lamb.*

Throughout that day, they were "cheerful without mirth and serious without sadness." Next day being Sunday, John administered the Lord's Supper in the morning and preached in the evening, and on Monday left for Ireland while the newly-weds spent two weeks at Garth, Charles preaching twice each day.

So Charles began a happy married life, with a bride from a family of high social standing, which made her even more readily acceptable to the Methodist societies. In the next few months he tried to prove John's thesis—that marriage ought not to limit labors. In a letter to John a few weeks after the wedding, he says:

"... More zeal, more life, more power, I have not felt for some years; (I wish my mentioning this may not lessen it) so that hitherto marriage has been no hindrance. You will hardly believe it sits so light upon me. I forgot my wife (can you think it?) as soon as I left her . . ." But later, he learned!

John apparently was very susceptible to women. At Oxford he had enjoyable fellowship with the Kirkham family,—Sally, Betty, Demaris, and Bob, of the Stanton Rectory, a few miles from Oxford, also with their friends, Mary and Anne Granville of nearby Buckland. They were of the same social strata, so that the atmosphere was lively, intellectual, and somewhat religious. He danced, walked, conversed,

and corresponded with these young ladies and found them very companionable and stimulating.

In correspondence they used classical pseudonyms. Sally, later Mrs. Chapone, was called both "Sappho" and "Varanese", John's and Charles' favorite name for her was "Varanese"; Mary Granville Pendarves was called "Aspasia"; Anne Granville, "Selima"; John "Cyrus"; and Charles, who joined the group later, was "Araspes".

In the spring of 1725, John became infatuated with "Varanese", indeed seems to have fallen deeply in love. The correspondence with both Varanese and Aspasia is in the rather stilted, artificial language of that time mixing endearing terms with spiritual discussions. It was saved from being too personal, however, by references and greetings from the two ladies to the two brothers and vice versa. John had a weakness for women with whom he was closely associated. Charles discovered this and feared it.

Varanese was religious as well as very lively and attractive. She introduced John to the writings of Thomas à Kempis, who started a new course in his life. He naturally thought some about matrimony but put it ahead several years because of both lack of finances and his characteristic hesitation before such a step. John, however, was either too slow or too wary; so she married the local schoolmaster Capone in Christmas week, 1725. On the succeeding Saturday evening, alone at Oxford, John asked himself in self-evaluation, "Have I loved women more than I have loved God?"

Even after her marriage, we find John escorting her home after a funeral and later, in 1736, writing to her from Georgia, though she had been married several years and her sister Betty, who had become Mrs. Wilson, had been dead since 1731. Their relations were entirely open and honorable, however, in spite of the fact that John was deeply wounded in heart.

Charles, too, was much intrigued with Varanese, even though she was married when he came into the circle. As we have seen, he wrote her and Selima from Georgia, and later in London he referred to Varanese as his "first friend."

After Sally married, an effort was made to link John with her younger but more sedate sister, Betty. John's sister, Molly, jibed him about Betty, apparently thinking he was interested. About the same time young Bob Kirkham, later a member of the Holy Club, wrote jauntily to John: "... You have often been in the thoughts of M. B. which I have curiously observed, when with her alone, by inward smiles and sighs and abrupt expressions concerning *you*. Shall this suffice? I caught her this morning in an humble and devout position

on her knees. I am called to read a *Spectator* to my sister Chapone . . . Keep your counsel, and burn this when perused . . . I subscribe myself your most affectionate friend and *brother* I wish I might write."

In 1729 when John was becoming somewhat critical of his first love, Charles warmly defended her. Years later Emily, always solicitous for her brother John and closer to him than any other of his sisters, philosophized thus to him: ". . . had you not lost your dear Mrs. C——n where had your love been fixed? On heaven, I hope, principally; but a large share too had been hers; you would not have been so spiritualized, but something of this lower world would have had its part of your heart, wise as you are; but being deprived of her, there went all hope of worldly happiness . . ."

Aspasia, Mary Granville Pendarves, succeeded Varanese and inherited John's love when she was twenty-five, three years older than John. She had been left a widow by Mr. Pendarves, who was a man of sixty when she married him at seventeen. She was witty, intelligent, and interested in religion, at least in sermons. She had a modest income and was possessed of social graces and the wiles of a widow. John became increasingly interested; their letters were warm even if somewhat indefinite. Near the close of their correspondence, she asked that John cease using endearing terms and insisted that he burn all her letters, which he did—after making copies for himself. Her three years in Ireland, during which she did not answer John's letters, cooled his ardor, so that when she wanted him to renew correspondence in 1735, he declined. Later she married Dean Delany, attained flattering recognition by great statesmen, and became a protégé of the King and Queen. But John could not forget her,—indeed after her marriage to Delany, he wrote to her from Georgia. Charles, seven years her junior, met her frequently and was mildly interested in her younger sister Anne.

Charles knew John's gullibility, especially his susceptibility to the attractions and charms of women. He was disgusted with John's having been deceived by Mrs. Hawkins on shipboard and also with his letters to her from Savannah. He was far from edified by reading John's diary and record of the experiences with Sophy Christiana Hopkey in Georgia, where not many attractive women were among the one thousand inhabitants of this new colony; the eminence of some may have been due to the flatness of the surrounding human terrain. The same was true also of desirable young men.

Sophy was seventeen years of age and John thirty-two when they first met; she only eighteen and he thirty-three when they had their

encounter with Cupid. We may take with a grain of salt John's account of her, written by a lonesome lover thousands of miles away and over twelve months after she had married another. Both John and a lover tend to idealize; she became what his eyes, clouded by love, saw her to be, but magnified by memory. Unquestionably she was an attractive young heiress. Possessed of proper modesty, she was also docile and submissive, even yielding; she had likewise a measure of earnestness and of religious interest. She was a good listener, or appeared to be, when John read to her frequently and long from religious classics. While lacking much formal education, she was intelligent and acquitted herself creditably when taking lessons from John.

As the most desirable young lady of the colony, she attracted many suitors and was somewhat attracted to some of them. But the handsome little priest, though shorter in stature than any of the others, excelled all of them in learning, social graces, and standing. He was the best "catch" in the colony,—as also was she! Others, if not she herself, deliberately tried to make a match. Charles, later, knew all this about her.

Sophy lived with and was the ward of her aunt, Mrs. Causton, whose husband, as magistrate, was the leading man in the community. His previous misdemeanors in England were not known yet in Georgia nor his present peculations yet found out. He was comparatively wealthy, and all his property would some day be Sophy's in addition to her own. In the obvious attempt to interest Wesley, this fact was not overlooked. To what degree she participated in their designs, however, it is difficult to say; but at least she always dressed in white after learning that white was John's favorite color. Oglethorpe wanted such an alliance and therefore threw them together for six days and nights in a romantic trip. In spite of, or perhaps because of the difference in their ages, both fell deeply in love. How could it be otherwise? Furthermore, she nursed him tenderly through an illness; that usually works and especially did so with John! For some time she breakfasted with him and Delamotte at the parsonage and spent most of the day there—propinquity!

To his own surprise and bewilderment, John began to think seriously of marriage. But he had to consult his friends. The Moravian advice at first was ambiguous, then adverse. Delamotte, his faithful companion, was disturbed by both John's gullibility and her subtle artfulness. John did not formally propose but came very near. He wanted to, yet feared doing so. On the trip arranged by Oglethorpe, he exclaimed, as they lay under the stars: "Miss Sophy, I should think

myself happy if I was to spend my life with you." In his diary he says that this was the expression of a sudden wish, not of any formal design. The conversation ended with a psalm.

A little later he wrote: ". . . I again hinted at a desire of marriage, though I made no direct proposal. For indeed it was only a sudden thought, which had not the consent of my own mind. Yet I firmly believe, had she (Miss Sophy) closed with me at that time, my judgement would have made but a faint resistance." Three weeks later after this his diary reads: "I know not what might have been the consequence had I then but touched her hand, and how I avoided it I know not. Surely God is over all!" And the next day: "At the end of a very serious conversation, I took her by the hand, and, perceiving she was not displeased, I was so utterly disarmed that that hour I should have engaged myself for life . . . a moment's reflection when she was gone convinced me that I had done foolishly. And I once more resolved by God's help to be more wary for the future." Less than ten days later we read: "I looked upon her and should have said too much, had we had a moment longer."

Poor John! But also poor Sophy! How she must have been mystified by his approaches and hesitations! And how that small community must have gossiped!

At last she grew tired of his delayed action, or inaction, and engaged herself to a more vigorous suitor nearer her age. John says she settled the matter for him.

John Wesley lost Sophy but not his love for her. Then poor John mixed the disappointed lover with the unbending priest. Too readily he accepted gossip about her as true and publicly humiliated her by refusing the sacrament. He probably could defend his action by strict ecclesiastical canons, but the motive was interpreted as pique. Law suits followed. John's usefulness in Savannah was ended. Not entirely ingloriously he left at night to embark for England.

On the outside of a notebook in which months later he recorded this episode with Sophy, he wrote, "Snatched as a brand out of the fire."

Charles knew all about this. Brother-like he hotly defended in England John's leaving Savannah. But it increased his distrust of John's dependability with women and influenced his conduct when later his older brother again fell in love. That next was with Grace Murray when John was forty-five. He was much older and "fell" harder.

Grace Norman Murray ran away from home at sixteen, allegedly to escape a parental choice for husband, and became a domestic or

servant-girl in London. She married Alexander Murray, a sea-going Scotchman, in a true-love experience. While he was on one of his trips, she joined the Methodists! On his return they quarreled about this but seemed reconciled when he started on another voyage. They lost a premature baby; a boy baby died later, driving Grace nearly to distraction. One boy survived and was educated at one of the Methodist schools. Alexander Murray was drowned, however, leaving Grace a widow at twenty-six.

Charles knew her well; after a strict examination he had admitted her into a Methodist Society. Grace bears witness to the power of his piercing eye, his seeming to read the inmost secrets of the heart.

Her next love involvement was with John Brydon. There was no formal engagement, but their marriage was generally expected. After he married elsewhere and backslid religiously, Grace was shocked and wondered whether she ought to have married him to save him.

She was made housekeeper at the Methodist Orphan House in Newcastle. This was not only a school for orphans but also a place of worship, a refuge for injured and oppressed, an institute and hospital for preachers, and a northern home-retreat for John Wesley. Here she manifested not only her efficiency in practical matters, but also her quick energy, natural tact, popular usefulness, and devotion to the work of God.

For ten years, she accompanied John Wesley as his helper, examining the women, organizing them into Societies and bands, visiting the sick, and praying with penitents. She also waited on John, even anticipating his wants, and made herself so necessary to him, so willing and able and so esteemed as a fellow-worker that John began to weaken on his conviction regarding matrimony, and even to persuade himself that he could be more useful in the married state. As one observed, she was the only fellow-worker John got along with for any length of time.

But she did not get along so well with fellow-workers at the Orphan House. There were quarrels and discord; indeed she left the House twice because of them. The Methodist women, knowing her, resented her intimacy with John and her "pre-eminence." She showed herself somewhat vain and selfish and supercilious, her reaction to the women being that "they hurt their own souls." Charles heard about this and also read John's estimate of her.

Her autobiography, which John took down and included in his account of their relationship, would give a psychiatrist a rich mine for study. He would mark her visions and dreams, her hypochondriacal or hysterical fits, her paroxysms of horror and despair, her

loss of memory, violent pains, suicidal desires, and ranges of "religious emotion from radiant joy to blank depression." Indeed on account of her "religious" activities, a Methodist once was inclined to commit her to a madhouse, for both her sister and her father at one time thought she was insane.

Everybody loves a lover; also Methodists tend to exalt John Wesley and, because he was unquestionably a great religious leader, to regard him as a superior in all lines. These two influences often prevail in the feeling for him and Grace Murray. But, as in the account of Sophy, his recorded estimate should be discounted, since love blinded his eyes, idealized whom he would have ideal, shutting out some features and enhancing others.

In August, 1748, John fell ill at Newcastle. The Sophy experience was repeated, but Grace was a more skilled and experienced nurse and in addition had, at least subconsciously, a widow's wiles. He wrote: "Sliding into it I know not how," [We know!] and he said to Grace: "If I ever marry, I think you will be the person." Then he spoke to her "more directly." She was amazed, could hardly believe it, "'twas too great a blessing," "all I could have wished for under heaven."

But she had also nursed another John, John Bennet, not for days as she had John Wesley, but for months. He was a well-educated and well-to-do lay preacher. Moreover he was over ten years younger than John Wesley and about Grace's own age. During his illness he and Grace also had fallen in love and they still corresponded. She now had two lovers—rivals.

Grace was with John at Charles' happy wedding, which occasion probably whetted John's slow-responding appetite. She accompanied him for the next few months in Ireland and in England, usually riding behind him on the same horse. The romance grew. John, as Charles well knew, was very susceptible to women with whom he was closely associated. In Ireland, probably at Grace's behest, they swore fealty to one another before witnesses in a contract, called *de praesenti*, a kind of official declaration of an intent to marry. This was repeated in England.

But Grace vacillated. She was not a flirt but suffered painfully from natural weakness and real indecision. She corresponded with both Johns. She travelled with John Wesley a few weeks, after his renewal of his proposal; then she was left in John Bennet's circuit. As she records it, "The day after Mr. Wesley went away, Mr. Bennett proposed marriage to me. A day or two after, I consented, without asking Mr. Wesley's advice." She was always in love with the one

she was with; when asked by one, she repudiated the other. She once wrote John Wesley that it was God's will that she should marry John Bennet and sent all Wesley's letters to him. Once while Wesley was in the ascendancy, in a fit of jealousy because of his seeming attention to another, she at once wrote and renewed her romance with Bennet. Yet when with Wesley she seemed all his and said so. If she could have been analyzed, the decision probably would have been that admiration and ambition said "Wesley", but love said "Bennet".

John Wesley, in spite of his longer and deeper infatuation, was still a hesitant, cautious wooer. He was, of course, honorable, but to a modern reader very foolish; also to Charles. Such a reader laughs at his absurd rationalizations. He pictured Grace only as she had been—a traveling companion and co-worker. Possible children need not interrupt; they could be left at the Kingswood school to be brought up. The fact is that he was incapable of real domesticity; he wanted a coadjutor rather than a wife.

When Grace urged him to marry at once, he said that he first must have an understanding with John Bennet, then one with his brother, Charles, and that he also should send an account of reasons for the procedure to every helper in England. Grace demurred but compromised,—“not over one year.” Wesley's letter to Bennet and his comment—“Here was her first false step”—on one of Grace's moves toward Bennet, show almost a self-righteousness, interpreting everything as if he were always in the right. Some smile at his characteristic “reasoning” as, with a prejudgment, he seems to weigh the pros and cons of his relations to Grace. After reading them, one asked if John Wesley were providing a housekeeper with a character or describing a bride-to-be. Another wonders whether John Wesley would marry at all, would ever come to the sticking point!

John Wesley made Rules; were they for others rather than himself? One of the Twelve Rules for Helpers read, “Take no steps toward marriage without consulting with your brethren.” Charles Wesley did so before his engagement; John Bennet tried to. John Wesley recognized this rule in putting Grace off. Did he not violate his agreement with Charles, without Charles' knowledge let alone assent?

Charles' part in preventing the marriage has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. Let us put ourselves in his place. He knew his brother's weakness regarding women, and fully believed John was blinded by passion and, when infatuated, capable of great folly. No one was more concerned than Charles for John's reputation and Methodist influence, nor more terrified by anything that would cast any suspicion on either. Grace hardly qualified as the wife of a

widely-known scholar, author, and public man. Helpful religious work alone would not be sufficient.

John, in his reaction and resentment, makes too much of Charles' reference to the fact that she was "low born" and had been a servant. A twentieth-century American democrat feels sympathy with John and antipathy against Charles. But in eighteenth-century England, Charles was more nearly right. It was not "snobbishness," as those of this century might so think. Charles was not a snob but a plain realist. Then the distinction of class was accepted by all, and the resulting social strata prevailed. John would have been cheapened with the Methodists and become more or less of a laughing stock with all others. Indeed jealousies, gossip, and even slander, were already rife. Her having been five months constantly with John had created remarks about her being his mistress before she became his wife. Many were not so pure-minded as John.

It may be partly that Charles' tendency to fear the worst made it worse than it really was, but Charles genuinely believed that many preachers would leave and societies break up if John were to marry Grace Murray, and that it was his duty therefore to avert this calamity and thus save his brother from worse than folly. He also was decidedly of the opinion that she was actually engaged to John Bennet and that his brother was trying to steal her away from her betrothed.

Moreover, he had been influenced by John's idea of celibacy for some, and especially for John himself. John felt he had been specially called of God for a peculiar task. His mother so felt and Charles did too. Charles feared that any marriage, especially such a marriage, would stop the work of God, stop the very revival which had been started by their joint efforts and which now needed John's full devotion to superintend, preserve, and extend. He apparently felt, as did John at times, that John should remain single and give himself solely to God's work. When George Whitefield had said that both Wesleys should marry, Charles pleaded hard for John's exemption.

Charles was far from being alone in his convictions. One "sister", whose testimony the infatuated John would dismiss as inspired by jealousy, probably reflected the opinion of many others when she wrote that John was in love with Grace Murray beyond all sense and reason, had shown so publicly, and had already caused so much uproar that the Societies were about to fly to pieces.

When Grace asked a leader at the Foundry for advice, she got it frankly: "Sister Murray, never think of it! I know you thoroughly. It will never do. The people would never suffer you and your spirit would not bear their behaviour. You have not humility enough or

meekness, or patience. You would be miserable all your life, and that would make him miserable too. So that instead of strengthening you would weaken his hands. If you love yourself, or if you love him, never think of it more." There were many others also whose eyes were not "blinded by passion."

Charles' clear convictions, together with an insistent call to duty for God's and the work's sake to save his brother aroused and increased his temperamental impetuosity, the result being that his vehemence precipitated the dramatic development of Grace's marriage to John Bennet. Charles seemed to outwit John to keep him from her and her from him.

His intensity of feeling coupled with illness made him swoon as he accosted Grace. John Bennet had to be persuaded that Grace still loved him. Grace obliged, probably thinking that John Wesley was lost to her. George Whitefield assisted Charles at the wedding and later broke the sad glad news to John Wesley. Charles' methods sprang from his impetuosity and vehemence; his motives were unalloyed and his objective, as he believed and as later John acknowledged, was of God.

Several unfortunate scenes followed. One occurred when the Wesley brothers met. Charles, beside himself with anxiety and excitement, greeted John with these words: "I renounce all intercourse with you but what I would have with a heathen man and a publican." Strong language, but calm John knew impulsive Charles. A moment later, however, they fell on each other's neck with tears. Then John Bennet came in, kissed John Wesley and both wept. In another private interview John Wesley cleared up some of Charles' misunderstandings so that the latter was inclined rather to blame Grace.

George Whitefield, when alone with John Wesley later, tried to comfort his older colleague by saying Grace was rightfully his, explaining that he had wanted them to wait but that Charles' impetuosity had prevailed.

But Grace had been etched on John Wesley's heart. He voiced his disappointment in a letter in which he said not marrying Grace was the severest trial of his life and referred to the "fatal irrevocable stroke." He also tried to relieve his feelings by writing about it, while traveling, a poem of twenty-seven stanzas of six lines each. The last two read:

*"What Thou hast done I know not now;
Suffice, I shall hereafter know!
Beneath thy chast'ning rod I bow;*

*That still I live to thee I owe,
O teach thy deeply humbled son,
Father! to say 'Thy Will be done.'*

*"Teach me from every pleasing snare
To keep the issues of my heart;
Be thou, my love, my joy, my fear!
Thou my everlasting portion art!
Be thou my never-failing friend,
And love, O love me to the end."*

He did not take his disappointments in love as handsomely as we might expect. In his first experience, he took it out on Sophy; in his second setback, he inclined to take it out on Charles. Could he really forget as well as forgive? A few months later Charles wrote: "Only me he cannot love as before. But I must have patience and suffer all things that the Gospel be not hindered." And three months later, he wrote to Bennet: "You and your partner must make me amends for the loss of my brother . . . whose love I have small hopes of recovering in this world."

It is idle to speculate what may have been the outcome if John Wesley had married Grace. Either the home or the "world parish" would have suffered; one would surely have been neglected. In addition to her children by Alexander Murray, she bore John Bennet five boys in the next ten years; certainly she could not travel much. We might have had a John Wesley succession at the expense of a John Wesley tradition. What was God's will? Charles, unwittingly, may have saved Methodism.

Can we see John as Charles saw him? We leave his "mother fixation" to psychologists to discuss. His early education had been entirely with women,—his mother and sisters.

John Wesley had a strong inclination toward celibacy and believed ministers should not marry. This held him by his own acknowledgment, until he was twenty-seven years old. A man had to stay single to hold the Oxford Fellowship. Subconsciously this could abet the idea. He thought he changed, probably did in reasoning, but it still lurked. In his "Notes" on Matthew 19:12 he wrote "Happy, they! who have abstained from marriage (though without condemning or despising it) that they might walk more closely with God." In an early tract which he revised only a little in later life, he reviewed at length the advantages of the single state. Four days after his later marriage, he urged his men to remain single for the Kingdom's sake,—to be as "eunuchs for the Kingdom of heaven's sake," as Matthew words it.

John blamed the mystic writers for the idea that marriage was inconsistent with Perfection, that some degree of taint necessarily attended the marriage-bed. As late as 1745 he was undecided if one who is perfect is capable of matrimony. Only slowly and gradually did he "shake off" this idea and says he did not until 1748, by which time he was falling in love with Grace. But did he fully shake it off? About seven years later he said, "I believe two who were made perfect in love never did, or will, marry together." Possibly this is the reason for his hesitation. Did he enjoy the company of women but fear the intimacy of the married state? Charles did not so believe.

But most potent of all was that conviction that he, John, was called of God for a special work. "A dispensation of the Gospel has been committed unto me. And I will do nothing which, directly or indirectly, tends to hinder my preaching the Gospel." God and God alone was the abiding love of John Wesley. Always God first. Charles shared John's conviction for *John*. Charles in his *Journal* added to John's "brand plucked from the burning," the words "not once only."

But were not John's love episodes instances of the flesh lusting against the spirit? John was a man; he had to struggle against the elemental passions of a man. It was not easy to subject all affections to his calling to preach the Gospel; indeed it was a struggle for many years. Charles knew this also. Indeed he knew John better than John himself and thought differently regarding women. In John's *Journal* of 1722, one of his Rules for self-examination was "to resist the very beginnings of lust."

After his Oxford self-examination about loving women more than God, he went to Georgia, "... where I see no women but those which are almost of a different species from me—to attain such a purity of thought as suits a candidate for that state wherein they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." But it did not work that way. There was Mrs. Hawkins. She was very attractive physically which partly accounts for his concern and efforts to save her soul. He wrote Charles in Greek, from Savannah: "I stand in jeopardy every hour. Two or three are women, younger, refined, God-fearing. Pray that I know none of them after the flesh."

With Sophy he had to fight his "inordinate affections" and again he reasoned about "the complicated temptations of the married state." He waged a constant warfare. It was at Savannah he translated Tersteegen's Hymn:

*"Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with Thee my heart to share?"*

*Ah, tear it thence and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there!
Then shall my heart from earth be free,
When it has found repose in Thee."*

He feared physical contact; once he knew not what might have happened if he touched Sophy. Again he "groaned under the weight of unholy desire."

He says he never did entirely conquer "for six months together" his unholy desires and inordinate affection until he was with Grace. When John Bennet wrote, after his marriage to Grace, that when John Wesley heard of it, "he was so enraged as if he had been mad, for he himself was inflamed with love and lust upon her," Wesley replied, "How came you to know that I 'was inflamed with lust'? Did your wife tell you so? If she did, she has made me a fair return. If you only, after having robbed me, had stabbed me to the heart, I might have perhaps endeavored to defend myself. But I can now only cover my face and say, 'Art *thou* also among them? art *thou!* my daughter!'"

Yes, he was betrothed to God alone; he sublimated carnal affections and triumphed after struggles over the flesh. Then he could continue to sing as he sang in 1746:

*"I have no sharer of my heart
To rob my Saviour of a part
And desecrate the whole;
Only betrothed to Christ am I
And wait his coming from the sky
To wed my happy soul."*

Yes, Charles knew John in this respect better than John knew himself. If only John had realized, as he once recognized, Charles' superior ability to see into and through persons and, in some matters, had been guided by his younger brother!

Charles had met a Mrs. Vazeille at Mr. Perronet's; he and his wife entertained her at the Gwynnes' for several days, traveled with her to London, and showed her about Oxford en route. They stayed at her home in London for eight or nine days. In his diary, Charles sized her up as "a woman of sorrowful spirit."

In his love for Grace, John thought he had reasoned away all objections to matrimony. Possibly also he was subconsciously envious of Charles' happy home life. At any rate he was determined to marry. His own Rules and his agreement with Charles, as we have noted, required consultation in advance. Charles had scrupulously followed

them. John, however, while not exactly observing them, had used them to put off Grace. Now he was not going to let rules or agreements get into his way. He would *inform* of a predetermined course but would not take the risk of much consulting. He consulted only Mr. Perronet, a close Huguenot friend of Mrs. Vazeille, who, of course, steered him toward her.

John knew her as a pious, generous, and loyal Methodist, who entertained preachers at her hospitable home. She had once been a servant girl but had married her master, Mr. Vazeille, a London merchant, who had pampered and indulged her. Dying, he left her a wealthy widow with four children. John did not then see how she could revert to vulgarity and be erratic, jealous, spiteful, and of violent temper. Charles might have foretold somewhat of this but was not being consulted.

John's courtship was brief, not over sixteen days. It culminated when a badly-sprained ankle made him a patient at her home. Though he wrote a Hebrew grammar and a text for the Kingswood School during the eight or nine days, conversation with Mrs. Vazeille was most effective. Again he was nursed. He saw her as industrious, frugal, and neat, which all appealed to him. Either he lost his hesitation or she was a wiser widow, or both. At any rate they became engaged. She "caught him on the rebound" from his experience with Grace.

The marriage was sudden and more or less secret; in fact, historians are not sure of the exact day. How much of this swift consummation should be credited to her is not known. But she became Mrs. Molly Goldhawk Vazeille Wesley. It must have been a strange ceremony, since a day or two before and a day or so after, he preached on his knees because of his injured ankle.

She was forty-one, he forty-eight; both should have known better. They were middle-aged, fixed in habits and interests. He was concerned chiefly about his Societies, she naturally about her home and children. Like Charles, he arranged that none of his wife's money should come to the Wesleys; and she, on her part, agreed not to interfere with his traveling.

True, he had informed Charles two weeks earlier about his desire to marry but had guarded against any interference by not telling the name of his intended. Charles was opposed to his marrying at all,—for the Kingdom's sake. When Mr. Perronet told Charles who she was, the latter was "thunderstruck," had "no suspicion she was the one," and retired "to mourn with my faithful Sally." He knew his brother; he likewise knew Mrs. Vazeille.

Charles was genuinely grieved. Since itinerating was necessary for the growing movement, he knew from his own experience that such was not compatible with marriage and a home. Charles knew also he was not fitted by temperament, health, or marriage to superintend the Societies and direct the helpers. All of John's time and talents were needed for those essential tasks.

Molly and Charles could never get along together. He could see through her and she knew it. She also resented his relation with John.

Unfortunately she and John were totally unsuited to each other. Neither in social graces nor in education was she worthy of him; obviously there could be no intimate intellectual intercourse between an ex-servant girl and an Oxford savant. John lacked real love and had neither taste, desire, nor leisure for domesticity. The Societies did not like her. Furthermore, her haughty ways with the women invited enmity, even insults.

In his first reaction, Charles acted up and showed his disfavor before the Societies; he almost had to be forced to meet the bride and groom. But he tried to make up for this. He called on her, kissed her, and assured her that he was entirely reconciled. A few days later he brought his wife and new sister-in-law together and the same week initiated a meeting for reconciliation with John.

Within four months after the marriage, Molly came to Charles in tears to complain about her husband. Charles pacified her but would not side against his brother. Then he got them together and engineered a reconciliation. Later, when she got John and Charles into a room from which they could not escape and told them their faults, Charles could stop her only by reciting Latin poetry. Thereafter he always referred to her as his "best friend." When John was ill in 1753 and seemed near death, at his request, his wife and brother agreed to forget the past and be reconciled.

But Charles and she could never agree. Though she insulted both him and his wife, he exhorted his wife to love her and pray for her adding, "I must pray or sink into a spirit of revenge." At the Leeds Conference he wrote his wife that he behaved toward her "very much like a gentleman." On another occasion he wrote, "I called two minutes, before preaching, on Mrs. Wesley at the Foundery and in all that time we had not one quarrel." Again he begged his wife to be courteous to her but not trustful.

For the first few trips after marriage Molly tried going with John, but the hardships were quite a departure from the comforts of her London home. She began to complain, and her fretting irritated John. Apartness was becoming apparent. She was bothered by having to

ride horseback or in a rough coach over bad roads, in all kinds of weather, with poor food, rude hosts, hard beds, and insufficient covering that sometimes caused itch; and she bothered John by saying so. Once Charles wrote: "I pity his poor wife, if now upon the road. There she is likely to stick till warm weather comes. The roads are almost impassable for wheels."

At first John's letters to her manifested some tender affection, and furthermore she helped him on some business and money matters, in which she was efficient; but his correspondence soon began to reflect their growing differences and gradually became hard, irritatingly reasoning and accusing, even giving ultimatums. He may have been justified but it was scarcely loving. His last letter to her is plain-spoken and decisive but entirely void of affection. In this he was probably honest.

Her jealousy and suspicious nature began to be displayed. Early after marriage he added a postscript to a letter reading, "If any letter comes to you directed to the Reverend Mr. Wesley, open it." She went too far, however, and soon he accused her of stealing some of his private letters.

She suffered often from the gout and went through the menopause a few years after marriage. The latter called for a sympathetic husband, which, John was not. Often in that period the mind aberrates. Molly was suspected of mental illness. John wrote of her: "I judge her case to be proper lunacy, but it is preternatural, a diabolical lunacy and therefore *at those times* (I know what I say) I do not think my life is safe with her."

This may in part account for her poisoning the minds of the servants against John, for her accusing him of having Charles' wife as his mistress, and for the account of a preacher who said that, in Ireland, he found little John on the floor, and Molly standing over him and holding in her hands tufts of his long hair which had been torn out by the roots. Also similarly might be explained her misinterpretation of spiritual messages in some of his letters she had stolen, her interpolations in others, and her giving them to his traducers.

But John was not blameless. Early in their married life, when she kept him waiting, he rode off in the coach without her. At another time, when she planned to return to him after a separation, he calmly told her before others that he would not be at home. After blaming her for "stealing" his letters, he broke her bureau open to get what he said was his. At that time he told her plainly in his exasperation: "While you are in this mind, I will neither bed nor board with you." Meanwhile she had read his full and fulsome manuscripts of his loves

for Sophy and Grace. These did not add to either her love or her admiration for him. In two of the purloined and doctored letters, he had admitted some minor improprieties, which she, of course, magnified.

Moreover his correspondence with many women-converts was voluminous. Such were frank, and some seemed to be of loving tone. No one would now doubt John's innocence and high-mindedness, but Molly did then. Charles understood John. To Mary Bosanquet John wrote in 1770: "But what are they afraid of? There is little danger now of any *wrong intercourse* between you and me. Indeed, we love one another and can trust one another; and there is good reason that we should. God seemed to mark us out for it long ago, and perhaps lately more than ever . . ." Mary was a saint, but such a letter and one complaining about his wife would not help matters. John also corresponded extensively with Sarah Crosby, whose estranged husband had left her. She too, after conversion, seemed a saint; but was John wise? Molly and John did not have that mutual openness and confidence assumed in the married relation, especially regarding correspondence. John hotly defended his right to correspond with whom he pleased.

Molly's pet peeve was Mrs. Sarah Benreкен Ryan. She had been a servant and had married three men, living with one or another at different times without getting a divorce from anyone of them. After a pious talk with John, she broke her promise to follow one to America. As a girl she had been vain and untruthful, and as an adult continued shallow and flippant. After conversion she was emotionally, if not fanatically, religious. John Wesley recognized her ability, for three years after her conversion, when she was thirty-three, with all three husbands still living, he made her manager of Kingswood. Thereby he gave his enemies a talking point and Molly certainly a cause for complaint. Again, as Charles so well knew, John was blind toward women with whom he was closely associated.

When making Mrs. Ryan his housekeeper, he warned her: "I can hardly avoid trembling for you still; and on what a pinnacle do you stand! Perhaps few persons in England have been in so dangerous a situation as you are now. I know not whether any other was ever so regarded by my brother and me at the same time." Regarding criticism he wrote her confidentially: "Surely God will never suffer me to be ashamed of my confidence in you. I have been censured for it by some of your nearest friends; but I cannot repent of it . . ." In fact, John tended to idealize her as he had Grace and in similar language.

Molly knew about her life but, unlike John, did not appreciate her conversion. Once when they gathered with the preachers around the festive board, Mrs. Ryan presided. Molly stood it as long as she could, then suddenly cried out, "The harlot, now serving you, has three husbands living." Some days later she found in John's pocket an unmailed letter addressed to Mrs. Ryan. In it, after some consoling remarks on his wife's outbreak, John went on to say: "The conversing with you, either by speaking or writing is an unspeakable blessing to me. I cannot think of you without thinking of God. Others have often led me to Him; but it is, as it were, going round about; you bring me straight into his presence."

He wrote to Mrs. Ryan often in those days and confided to her his troubles with his wife. "Last Friday," wrote he in one of these letters, "after many severe words, my wife left me, vowing she would never see more . . . I almost doubted whether I had done well in writing or whether I ought to write you at all. After prayer, that doubt was taken away." Less than two weeks later he again wrote: "The being continually watched over for evil; the having every word I spoke, every action I did (small and great) watched over with no friendly eye, the hearing a thousand little tart, unkind reflections . . . yet I could not say 'Take Thy plague away from me' but only 'Let me be purified, not consumed.'"

In a pious letter from Mrs. Ryan to John these sentences occur: "I do not know how to steer between extremes, of regarding you too little or too much . . . Yet if God should say, Do not write or converse any more; if he should show *you* it is not right; I am this moment ready to do His will . . ." John was pure-minded and naïve; he published all this correspondence in his *Arminian Magazine*. We cannot imagine Charles so writing.

Again let us transport ourselves into the eighteenth century in England. Then we can better understand John Wesley's idea of women as subordinate. But his ideas and exhortations must have been irritating to Molly especially when he wrote her how he had raised her out of obscurity and that she should no longer contend for mastery, for power, money or praise, but should be content to be a private insignificant person "known and loved by God and me." As master he could invite to their home whom he pleased and go when and where he pleased without giving anyone an account thereof. "Leave me," said he, "to be governed by God and my conscience. Then I shall govern you with gentle sway . . ."

Yes, the times were different from ours. In John Wesley's 'On Duties of Husbands and Wives' he said that the wife should say and

let it sink into her soul, "My husband has a right to rule me; God has given him this, and I will not strive against God." No matter if she knew more or had more money, he is not beneath but above her. Try that out now! Nor can we imagine Charles Wesley even then so speaking and acting!

John had agreed with Mrs. Vazeille before marriage that he would not preach one sermon less nor travel one mile less. He did not, was proud of it, and prescribed it for others. He persuaded himself and told others that he married because he needed to have a home and to recover his health. He said, "I did not seek happiness thereby and did not find it." Also he thought he might be more useful in the married state. The usefulness continued, it is true, but *in spite* of his "married state."

As earlier in a tract, so just before and again just after his marriage he publicly advised single men to remain single, unless there were special reasons for marriage. Celibacy lurked still in his subconsciousness.

On Sunday a day or so before his marriage, while preaching in the Foundery on his knees on account of the injured ankle, he read his apology for the course he was about to take, which Charles said was "lamentable" and "made us all hide our faces." This "Apology" was repeated in another chapel the Sunday after his marriage, to the consternation of the Methodist audience and the amazement of his bride.

What a contrast John's was to Charles' marriage and home! John and Molly lived "together", that is, in the same house, for over half of their married life; but she left him for various periods, returning of her own volition four times. After she left him in 1771, he wrote those famous words "*Non eam relinqui, non dimisi; non revocabo.*" [I have not left her; I have not sent her away; I will not recall her.]

In her last two letters she sought reconciliation, but John was adamant. She died at seventy-five years of age, thirty years after her marriage to John, but John did not even know of her death until several days after. In her will she left him a ring and a message that she always loved and esteemed him.

When Molly stole, interpolated, and gave the doctored letters to John's enemies, who gave them to the press, Charles was terribly excited, fearing the worst from the scandal; but John was calm, unaffected, and confident, and carried out the plans he had made as if nothing were pending. In later years, with the perspective of time, he believed that God had overruled this painful experience for good, affording no temptation to settle down and thus be unfaithful to the great work to which God had called him. This last consideration, as

we have seen, was Charles' main motive in helping deliver him from the greater danger in **Grace**.

In 1789 John, recalling his Grace episode, wrote to one of his preachers: "Many years ago . . . when I came to these words in the Lesson for the day, 'Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke,' I was quite stunned and could not just then read a word more. But afterwards I saw God was wiser than me." Mr. Perronet who guided John to Molly said of this experience that John was "plainly bearing the visible chastisement of a loving Father in heaven."

John Wesley had written in 1775 about a preacher, "If he falls in love, there is an end of his usefulness." Several times, including times of disappointed love, he referred to himself as "a brand plucked from the burning." Charles declared that he was so plucked several times! Vicar Berridge had a similar idea, for he wrote Lady Huntingdon: "Marriage has sadly crippled Charles, and would have done the same by John and George [Whitefield] if God had not sent them a brace of ferrets."

Glad indeed should we be to learn that the great John Wesley was human, a man like unto us. He was such a superman in his tremendous work—as great as, or greater than, any other in the history of the Church—that we may easily forget his weaknesses, his blind spots, and should be even more glad that Charles was fully aware of these defects and in his impetuous way tried his best to save his older brother from them.

Itinerant Evangelists

For eighteen years after their "conversion", John and Charles were itinerant evangelists. More is known about John, whose *Journals* were written with an eye to publication; Charles' were not and therefore were scantier and more personal. Charles shrank from anything that savored of ostentation; indeed he wanted to be out of the public eye.

But he equaled John in labors abundant, in toilsome travel, in persistent energy, in grueling self-sacrifice, in fierce persecutions and in dauntless courage. When John said that leisure and he had parted company, he spoke for his brother also. Both traveled all over England and Ireland. Both were intrepid pioneers. Each preached three or four times a day; in the intervals John read or wrote letters and tracts, while Charles wrote hymns. Charles traveled England from Lands End to Newcastle, was oft in Wales, and spent several months in Ireland. In one trip of six weeks to Northern England, he visited thirty places, including Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Newcastle, Epworth, and Oxford. Except in London and Bristol, his visits were brief, and even in those two places he did not tarry long; he and his brother were itinerants indeed. Charles met the Methodists for worship and preached in cottages, in farm kitchens, in barns, in a corn-kiln, in a third floor garret among coal and looms, in a room over a stable, in a blacksmith shop, in a second floor room over a noisy smithy reached only by a removable ladder, in a dancing school, in an inn, in a taken-over old theatre, in an out-of-repair ex-Episcopal Chapel over a stable, in an abandoned copperhouse—anywhere people could be gathered together. Charles, like John, usually traveled on horseback over trails called "roads" and frequently went astray. He had no home for over ten years but stayed in various houses en route. This was especially hard for one of his temperament.

John and his brother were a great team. They consulted constantly, and usually they alternated in different parts to cover more territory. Sometimes one pioneered and the other followed up; then the roles were reversed. Charles was first in Wednesbury and vicinity and in Grimsby where the meeting house was mobbed. He founded the Society at Newcastle, opened a Chapel at Wapping, pioneered

many places in Ireland, started the work amid much tribulation in various towns in Cornwall, where later there were so great results. After Charles broke new ground, John would follow to organize and solidify, following Charles' procedure. He would preach in such Churches as were available and any other places where he could gather people together. He would hold meetings with conversations, prayer, singing, exhortation, and expounding of Scripture. Yes, they were a great team.

On such trips both John and Charles took a traveling companion for company, for helpful service and, even more important, as a witness to their conduct and behavior. The audiences that the Wesleys gathered were mostly colliers, miners, or other laboring classes, but there were some of the industrial workers and small traders. Their converts, however, came mainly from the lower classes with some few from the middle classes. John and Charles confined their labors to the growing industrial centers and vicinities, paying little or no attention to fashionable circles or to sparsely settled rural areas. They limited their circumscribed efforts to places where they were the most needy folks.

John indeed had almost a contempt for the rich and "great". He despised the "great vulgar" and was sarcastic about their shallowness and superficiality. In his *Journal* we find frequent expressions such as this one: "Observing some lords and ladies in my congregation, I endeavored to reduce my discourse to the level of their understanding." The high-born John could not be pleased to go to the fashionable audiences ministered to by the low-born George Whitefield.

Charles shared John's attitude somewhat: he honestly loved those whom he called "my best friends, the poor." And later in life he paid his respects to the "Modern Man of Fashion" in a witty poem:

*"A man of taste and dissipation, . . .
In sleep, in dress, and sport and play
He throws his worthless life away;
Has no opinion of his own,
But takes from leading Beaux the ton . . .
With a disdainful smile or frown
He on the riff-raff crowd looks down;
The world polite his friends and he;
And all the rest are—nobody! . . .
Custom pursues, his only rule,
And lives an Ape, and dies a Fool."*

But Charles, like George, could serve as readily in drawing rooms

as in the slums. Indeed the range of Charles' converts shows his superior versatility. While most of his converts were of the lower classes, he was used of God for the spiritual benefit of Vicar Stonehouse, whom he assisted for a while; Vicar Henry Piers, for whom he revised sermons; John Gambold of Holy Club association; and many others. Charles was nearer to and more welcomed by the clergy of the Church. He also ministered helpfully to the learned Ainsworth, the poet Byrom of Manchester and Cambridge, the intellectual Delamotte family, and also the independent Perronets, one of whom accompanied Charles on a trip, while another gained fame as the author of "All hail the power of Jesus' Name." God also used him in the conversion of some people of means,—Mrs. Gumley of whom more will be said; the mother of Sir George Wheeler, who built a Chapel for his tenants; Ben Seward and his brother, William Seward, who offered to bear the expense of Charles' coach hire (which was refused), and who later went to America with George Whitefield as a traveling companion and bought a ship for George's coasting voyages.

His musical ability also became the lure to salvation for many such as the precentor of a Presbyterian meetinghouse. But the greatest prize was the actress, Mrs. Rich, the wife of the proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre. After she heard Charles preach, she would not go on the stage again. Charles enjoyed her musical circles, which he used for Kingdom purposes; "we caught a physician by the ear". Two of Mrs. Rich's step-daughters took music lessons from Handel, who, by the way, wrote tunes for several of Charles Wesley's hymns. Through her circles Charles became a spiritual adviser to the Earl of Mornington, the renowned organist Kelway, and the famous composers, Boyce and Lampe. He was also instrumental in bringing Magistrate Jones of Fonmon Castle into active fruitful fellowship. God used his scholarship, gentlemanly bearing, and poetic talents for the work of His Kingdom.

Apparently, like John, he put experience ahead of, almost to the disregard of, opinions. John gloried in the fact that the Methodists allowed freedom of conscience in becoming members of the Societies and neither asked nor cared for "opinions". "They think and let think." Charles was as broad, if not broader. He was influenced more by the heart than the head; this was evidenced in his regard for the Moravians and for George Whitefield.

As has been already noted, John said he disliked controversy, but was constantly in it and met it head on. Charles was quite the opposite. He said little about it but avoided it as much as possible. He abruptly dismissed an audience to by-pass it on one occasion; and

on other occasions he as abruptly dropped the conversation, or when caught in an argument, became silent or ended the subject summarily by an expression such as "I cite you to answer before Jesus Christ." But before Bishops or Magistrates Charles was fearless and aggressive, stood up persistently for his rights, and seemed sometimes to be tactlessly truculent.

He was usually tolerant, though like John he disliked Dissenters. He felt kindly toward the despised Quakers; "He that doeth the will of my father, the same is my brother and sister and mother," quoted he about them. In Ireland, where he suffered much from Roman Catholic opposition, he had friendly fellowship with some, and quoted Roman Catholic literature in his sermons. He proudly records the fact that at one town in Cork County, "The Presbyterians say I am a Presbyterian, the people that go to Church that I am a minister of theirs; and the Catholics are sure I am a good Catholic in my heart." Later he fearlessly and unpopularly defended the latter during the anti-Catholic riots in London. But he could not abide proselyting. He once called some Baptists, "a carnal, caviling, contentious sect, always watching to steal away our children to make them as dead as themselves."

Charles was not robust. Considering his premature birth, his asceticism and fasting at Oxford, his physical experiences in Georgia, and his many varied activities in England, it is a wonder that he lived to be eighty. He had frequent and violent attacks of pleurisy and suffered from dysentery, neuralgia, rheumatism, fevers, and gout. But in spite of this and the heavy routine of preaching and travel, he said in 1748, "I never slack my pace for way or weather." In his travels he endured many hardships and preached in spite of all vicissitudes. He once preached kneeling because of a bad sprain. Several times he was "sweated, blooded, vomited" by doctors.

His health partly accounts for his frequent moods of depression or despondency, but a true poet is usually mercurial. He had his ups and downs. He was filled with great joy when not ill and the Gospel went well; but at other times the message, like himself, seemed weak and made him complain of "deadness". He had periods of "spiritual darkness" like those of the mystics. He often longed for death in such moods and in periods of ill health.

He was frequently in danger on his constant travels, which were mainly on horseback over treacherous trails. Often he lost his way, and referred to his "genius for wandering." Rain, even hail and snow, slowed but never stopped him. Frequently he was wet through; once he says, "We had one shower—which lasted all day." On an-

other occasion a hurricane knocked his horse down and blew him out of the saddle and several yards off the highway. One time when a highwayman took some of his money and asked if he had any more, Charles evasively invited the highwayman to search him, thereby saving several pounds. He had other narrow escapes from highwaymen, one when with his wife and one with Perronet, when they passed the robbers who victimized coaches and individuals just before and behind them. Innumerable seem the times his horse fell or "threw" him. Each one was dangerous with more or less painful results, one especially so. Wrote he: "May 30. My horse threw me and fell upon me. My companion thought I had broken my neck but my leg only was bruised, my hand sprained and my head stunned, which spoiled me from making hymns."

The travel through Ireland and ferry trips to Wales were hazardous in those days. Charles thus described one such trip from Ireland:

"Towards evening the wind freshened upon us; and we had full enough of it. I was called to account for a bit of cake I had eaten in the morning and thrown into violent exercise . . . It was now pitch-dark, and no small tempest lay upon us. The Captain had ordered in all the sails. I kept most upon deck . . . While we were talking, the mainsail (as I take it) got loose, and blew overboard, as if it would drag us all after it. The small boat, at the same time, for want of fastening, fell out of its place. The Master called 'all hands on deck' and thrust me down into the cabin. Within a minute we heard a cry above, 'We have lost the mast!' A passenger ran up, and brought us worse news, that it was not the mast, but the poor Master himself, whom I had scarcely left when the boat, as they supposed, struck him overboard. From that moment he was seen and heard no more . . .

"I blessed God that I did not stay in the vessel last night. A more tempestuous one I do not remember. I wrote a thanks[g]iving hymn:

*"All praise to the Lord
Who rules with a word
The untractable sea,
And limits its rage by His steadfast decree;*

*Whose providence binds
And releases the winds,
And compels them again
At his beck to put on the invisible chain.*

*Even now he hath heard
Our cry and appear'd*

*On the face of the deep
And commanded the tempest its distance to keep;
His piloting hand
Hath brought us to land;
And no longer distress'd
We are joyful again in the haven to rest."*

This was closely followed by this ferry experience: "At half past nine I took horse in a perfect hurricane and was wet through in less than ten minutes . . . at five in afternoon entered the boat at Baldon Ferry with a clergyman and others who crowded our small crazy vessel. The water was exceedingly rough, our horses frightened and all looking to be upset every moment. The minister acknowledged he never was in the like danger. We were half drowned in the boat—I sat at the bottom with him and a woman who stuck very close to me, so that my being able to swim would not have helped me . . ." Space forbids detailing his other escapes such as the shot of a hunter barely missing him and his being nearly crushed to death by a dray on London Bridge. At times he did seem providentially protected.

The inconveniences of travel and entertainment were grievous beyond our power to appreciate. In Dublin they had to buy a home or rather a barn. Why? Charles tells us: "For here I can stay no longer. A family of squalling children, a landlady just ready to lie in, a maid who has no time to do the least thing for us, are some of our inconveniences. Our two rooms for four persons (six when J. Healy and J. Haughton come) allow no opportunity for retirement. Charles (Perronet) and I groan for elbow room; our diet answerable to our lodgings; no one to mend our clothes; no money to buy more. I marvel that we have stood our ground so long in these lamentable circumstances."

He also wrote his wife about an experience, which kind probably occurred too often but was seldom recorded. "I slept—or I should say lodged at a sister's who made over her bed and *companions* [bugs] to me. They put me in mind of Cornwall. I rose this morning at four. I cannot say *awoke*, for the *lops* [bugs] forbade my sleeping."

The persecution of early Methodism was serious and often dangerous. Whitefield met much and the Wesleys even more,—Charles as much as John. This was caused by a populace brutal and brutalized beyond our ken, by the suspicion, fear, and tension of the times, and by ignorant masses who were easily influenced by "reports" and propaganda. Some clergymen were friendly, but too often the clergy roused and even led the opposition. Communities were isolated; law

and order such as we know, did not prevail; some magistrates and mayors were helpful, but most were neutral and evasive and too often actively hostile. Mobs gathered readily, especially when aroused by pulpit or by ale or by both.

Though timid by disposition, Charles was fearless in facing danger; under fire he was brave, seemingly transfigured. In many places opponents tried to keep him from being heard, using such various devices as yelling and gnashing, bells, horns, drums, fire-engines, ballad singing, driving animals into the assembly, and throwing such missiles as stones, clods, dung, potatoes, eggs, etc. Amusement mingles with indignation when Charles tells how he had to talk loud and fast to offset one bawling in his ear and how, on another occasion, someone tried to drown him out by putting his hat over Charles' mouth. Occasionally his audience cared for a would-be interrupter. One time a drunkard approached and tried to stop Charles. The hearers laid rough hands on him, but Charles pleaded with them not to hurt him. So they took him by the arms and legs and passed him from one to another to the outer rim of the audience. In Cork the women of the audience seized a priest who had apparently imbibed his courage, pulled him back, expostulated with him, and dismissed him through a garden, where one had to repel his attentions by cuffs. At another place a young man with rotten eggs in his pockets was struck before he could throw them and in an instant was "perfumed all over" though it was "not as sweet as balsam."

So they tried to break up meetings, but the mob spirit would not stop with just this. They sometimes attacked the Methodist meeting-houses, breaking windows, smashing or burning the wainscoting, benches, desks, and other furniture, destroying Bibles and even pulling meeting-houses down wholly or in part. Charles passed one where "not one stone was left above another."

The next or accompanying step was attacks on persons. Brutal and numerous assaults were made with stones, knives, clubs, and bull dogs. Throwing Methodists into rivers or ponds was another pastime. Some of Charles Wesley's accounts describe these experiences and incidentally testify to his courage:

At Cardiff in Wales: "We sang on, unconcerned, though those sons of Belial, the players, had beset the house. They were armed, and threatened to burn the house . . . We prayed and sang, with great tranquility, till one in the morning. Then I lay down until three, rose again, and was scarcely got into the room, when they discovered a player just by me, who had stolen in unobserved. They seized him and Felix Farley wrested the sword from him . . . When the sword

was brought in, the spirit of faith was kindled at the sight of danger . . . My female advisers were by no means for my turning out, but deferring my journey. I preferred Mr. Well's advice, of going with him through the midst of our enemies . . ."

At Walsal: "While I was departing a stream of ruffians was suffered to bear me from the steps. I rose, and having given the blessing, was beaten down again. So the third time, when we had returned thanks to God for our salvation I then, from the steps, bade them depart in peace, and walked quickly back through the thickest rioters."

At Sheffield a few days later where a mob had pulled down the Methodist Chapel: "I went to the society-house next door to our brother Bennett's. Hell from beneath was moved to oppose us. As soon as I was in the desk, with David Taylor, the floods began to lift up their voice. An officer (Ensign Garden) contradicted and blasphemed. I took no notice of him and sang on. The stones flew thick, hitting the desk and people. To save them and the house, I gave notice I should preach out, and look the enemy in the face . . . The stones often struck me in the face. After sermon I prayed for sinners as servants of their master the devil, upon which the captain ran at me with great fury, . . . He forced his way through the brethren, drew his sword, and presented it to my breast. My breast was immediately steeled. I threw it open, and fixing mine eye on his, smiled in his face and calmly said 'I fear God and honour the King!' His countenance fell in a moment; he fetched a deep sigh; put up his sword; and quickly left the place. To one of the company, who afterwards informed me, he said 'You shall see, if I do but hold my sword to his breast, he will faint away.' So perhaps I should, had I only his principles to trust to; but, if at that time I was not afraid, no thanks to my natural courage . . . Satan now put it into their hearts to pull down the society house; and they set to their work while we were praying and praising God . . . the Constable . . . desired me to leave town, since I was the occasion of all this disturbance. I thanked him for his advice, withal assured him, I should not go a moment the sooner for all this uproar . . . he went from us and encouraged the mob. They pressed hard to break open the door. I would have gone out to them, but the brethren would not suffer me. They labored all night for their master and by morning had pulled down one end of the house . . . Their outcries often waked me in the night; yet I believe I got more sleep than any of my neighbors. At five I expounded the pool of Bethesda and stayed conversing with the society till eight . . . The house was now on the point of being taken by storm. I was writing within when the cry of my poor friend and his family,

I thought, called me out to those sons of Belial . . . What was done with the prisoner (one of the rioters) I know not; for in five minutes I was fast asleep in the room which they had dismantled."

On the next day they had to pass through Thorpe, where the people "were exceeding mad against us . . . The ambush rose, and assaulted us with stones, eggs, and dirt. My horse flew from side to side till he forced his way through them. David Taylor they wounded in his forehead, which bled much . . . I returned and asked what was the reason a Clergyman could not pass without such treatment . . . with horrible imprecations and stones, that would have killed both man and beast, had they not been turned aside by a hand unseen. My horse took fright and hurried away with me down a steep hill . . . Blessed be God, I got no hurt but only the eggs and dirt. My clothes indeed abhorred me and my arm pained."

In Cornwall Charles had wild times during his pioneer work: ". . . the Minister's mob fell on us, threatening and striking all that came near . . . They assaulted us with sticks and stones, and endeavored to pull me down. I bade them strike me and spare the people . . . Ten cowardly ruffians I saw upon one unarmed man, beating him with their clubs, till they felled him to the ground. Another escaped by the swiftness of his horse. My convoy they set upon . . . and forced him to fly for his life. I walked on slowly, with the rabble behind . . . The Lord hid us in the hollow of his hand . . . The enemy still pursued. I went out and looked them in the face; and they pulled off their hats, and slunk away."

At Devises, the rioters used a fire engine whose playing "diverted them for some time but their number and fierceness still increased, and the gentleman plied them with pitchers of ale, as much as they would drink . . . We had now stood siege for about three hours; and none but the Invisible Hand could have kept them one moment from tearing us to pieces . . . Such threatenings, curses, and blasphemies I had never heard. They seemed kept out by a constant miracle . . . We were kept from all hurry and discomposure of spirit by a divine power resting upon us . . . They were now close to us, on every side, and over our heads, untiling the roof."

In Ireland we are not so surprised at their danger: "They have often threatened our lives. Mr. Paterson they knocked down and cut in several places while on the ground; then threw into a cellar and cast stones on him . . ."

At Athlone a few days later a mob overtook them: "We were mounting a little hill when three or four men appeared at the top, and bade us go back. We thought them in jest, till the stones flew. John

Healey was knocked off his horse with a stone, fell backwards, and lay without sense or motion . . . I observed the man who knocked down John Healey, striking him on the face with his club, and cried to him to stop; which drew him upon me, and probably saved our brother's life, whom another blow might have despatched. They had gathered, against our coming, great heaps of stones, one of which was sufficient to beat out our brains. How we escaped them, God only knows, and our guarding angels. I had no apprehension of their hurting me, even when one struck me on the back with a large stone, which took away my breath . . . As often as we returned, we were driven off by showers of stones. Some were for returning home; but I asked if we should leave our brother in the hands of his murderers . . . The man who wounded John Healey was the Priest's servant and rode his master's horse. He was just going to finish the work with his knife, swearing desperately that he would cut him up, when a poor woman from the house came to his assistance, and swore as stoutly that he should not cut him up. The man half killed her with a blow from John Healey's whip; yet she hindered him till more help came." The mob withdrew after a Protestant-Papist fight and the coming of protecting soldiers.

Before magistrates, Charles Wesley was calm and even aggressive. Arrested in Wales, he addressed the court,—“Mr. Bailiff, I honor you for your office' sake, but was you yourself, or His Majesty King George, among my hearers, I should tell you both, that you are by nature damned sinners. In the church, while preaching, I have no superior but God, and shall not ask man leave to show him his sins.” In one case he refused, when requested, to promise to refrain from preaching; in another he refused to leave town until his character was completely cleared. When accused of treason because he had prayed that the Lord would call his banished home, he explained he did not refer to the Pretender, but to those who confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on earth, seeking a better country. The magistrates understood.

Charles' courage had been shown in the dangerous riot of the Kingsbury colliers which he quelled in 1740. Then too God seemed to be with him. “I rode up to a ruffian,” wrote he, “who was striking one of our colliers and prayed him rather to strike me. He would not, he said, for all the world and was quite overcome. I turned on one who struck my horse and he sunk into a lamb.” Nearly forty years later he publicly defended the unpopular Catholics in the anti-Catholic riots and persecution in London. In it, he wrote a stinging satire ridiculing both mob malice and magisterial weakness.

We can hardly appreciate or even imagine the sufferings of the early Methodists. The mobs, not content with attacking meetings and meeting-houses, proceeded further; they frequently entered homes and shops, injuring inmates and destroying their possessions. Men were stoned, clubbed, stabbed, knocked insensible, arrested as "vagrants," and railroaded into the army. Even women were violently assaulted; they were kicked, beaten, dragged and trampled, their clothes cut and set on fire. One was "of great age". Another, lying in, had her bed torn from under her and destroyed; another had her clothes torn to tatters and was so beaten and abused that she spat blood for several days. Another, whose husband was incapacitated by a thrown stone, was clubbed and had to take to her bed; still another was stunned by fists, had her head beaten against a wall, and was so otherwise abused as to cause miscarriage.

The rioters entered Methodist homes, breaking all windows, smashing or burning heavy furniture, destroying or stealing goods, cutting up feather beds and linen, breaking up bedsteads, and even cutting up Bibles.

Alas, also, for Methodist shops or businesses! Customers were assailed, shops partly torn down, goods destroyed, shopkeepers cruelly driven out. Little or no redress could be had as these illegal acts usually were made where the local magistrates, covertly or openly, were of the same mind as the rioters. As he went through one town, Charles said he could recognize the Methodist houses by the marks of violence on them.

But the Lord's work not only went on but even prospered. Societies sprang up and grew even amid persecution. Charles, reviewing his work in one of the worst shires, wrote: "What have they not done to crush this rising sect! But, lo! they prevail nothing . . . For one preacher they cut off, twenty spring up. Neither persecution nor threatening, flattery nor violence, dungeons, or sufferings of various kinds, can conquer them. Many waters cannot quench this little spark which the Lord hath kindled, neither shall the floods of persecution drown it." This was bound to transform the communities and change their attitudes towards the Methodist leaders. As intimated before, the places where Charles had pioneered and where he encountered the worst riots, became strongholds of Methodism.

The Wesleys, though small of stature, must have had piercing eyes and commanding presence. Both John and Charles, when they faced mobs, "fixed eyes" on ringleaders, walked boldly up and through them. True, at times followers hovered over them and took the blows of stones or clubs intended for the Wesleys; but their self-control and

mob-control were remarkable. Charles' benign countenance, kind ways, and patent sincerity were very effective. He also manifested marvelous patience in awaiting cheerfully a contemplated attack or in taking an opponent by the hand. Would Peter Cartright have allowed a man to tweak his nose and escape unharmed, as Charles once did? But while due credit should be given to the Wesleys' attitudes, we must not overlook the effect of the Gospel preached nor fail to attribute with Charles many escapes to an overruling Providence.

Moreover, there were other and more devastating attacks—misrepresentations and verbal assaults in a hostile press, scurrilous pamphlets and jeering poems. Charles had to defend himself once before the Bishop who, however, did not believe the charge of adultery against him. He was also formally accused of treason and unmercifully slandered.

The most frequent and most effective charge against the Wesleys was that of "Papism" or "Popery". Ridiculous as it is to us, it had then real vogue and harassing results. It was as disastrous to call a man "Papist" in those days as to call a man a "Bolshevik" or "Communist" in later days. The Methodists suffered much for the charge of "Papism" both in physical violence and in publications; the suspicion haunted them constantly. Why? The period was one of nervous excitement and suspicion; panic arose from dangers of a pro-Catholic invasion, from real Jacobite intrigues, and from papal emissaries and "spies". These were magnified in the popular mind and abetted by a trend of individuals to Rome.

But why were Methodists suspect, reported to be in collusion with Rome, reports spread by enemies and too generally accepted? To many, they seemed to resemble Popery in certain respects: their austerity and asceticism and fastings, their meetings in private houses, their class meetings resembling the confessional, their regular contributions, their claim to be an order rather than a sect, their lay preachers recalling certain Catholic orders, their "Perfection" resembling Catholic "sainthood", their emotional preaching and enthusiasm. Indeed Bishop Lavington's booklet, "The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared," had a wide circulation. Also John's peculiar weakness, which influenced weaker followers in ascribing many events as supernatural or miraculous, and his Pope-like patriarchal government added to the suspicion.

True Methodism was misrepresented, but the Wesleys had to take cognizance of it and make moves to counteract it; when Catholics were ordered out of London, John changed his plans for a trip and stayed in the city.

Another feeling against the Methodists arose from the threatening cry that the Church was in danger from them. In Cornwall, Charles was serenaded by the ditty:

*"Charles Wesley is come to town
To try, if he can, to pull the Churches down."*

This idea was assiduously promulgated by some clergymen and too readily accepted by the inflammable institution-loyal populace.

We must not conclude, however, that all the clergy actively assailed the Wesleys, for many were kindly, some indeed quite helpful; but too many openly or covertly opposed them. Wesleyan vigor and devotion shamed their inactivity; the reaction from Puritan "enthusiasm" made them honestly fear the Methodists. The Wesleyan claim to divinely inspired messages was resented, and there was general misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the doctrine of Perfection. We should not forget also that too often ignorant, fanatical followers of the Wesleys railed against the clergy, speaking most harshly and provocatively about them. But chiefly the Wesleys offended by organizing the people into Societies not subject to any control by the Church in which they held membership and of which they professed to be a part; they rejected her authority and tradition and disregarded her canons,—particularly by lay preaching and field preaching.

The clergy, too, resented having irregular, unauthorized preachers of their own denomination invade their parishes against ecclesiastical law. King, in the book which changed John Wesley's thinking about bishops and presbyters and which he quoted in defense of his ordinations, also said in that same book: "When Church had been regularly formed under the jurisdiction of their proper Bishops, it had been unaccountable impudence and a most detestable act of schism, for anyone, though never so legally ordained, to have entered those parishes and then to have performed ecclesiastical administrations, without the permission, or, which is all one, in defiance to the Bishops or Ministers thereof."

See and feel as people then felt. Organizing Societies where the regular ministry was "awakened" or evangelical was debated on the request of such ministers; in the present "Discipline" of the Methodist Church of the United States are precautions against allowing irregular, unauthorized evangelists to come into a parish. Once John made his defense before a Bishop in these brave words, as John records them:

"As to my preaching here, a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, and woe is me if I preach not the gospel, wherever I am in

the habitable world. Your Lordship knows, being ordained a Priest, by the commission I then received, I am a Priest of the church universal; and being ordained as a Fellow of a College, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God, in any part of the Church of England. I do not therefore conceive, that, in preaching here by this commission, I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask, 'Shall I obey God or man?' . . .

"Suffer me to tell you my principles in this matter. I look on *all the world as my parish*; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation."

He reasoned in a letter: "My answer to them which trouble me is this: God commands me to do good unto all men; to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man commands me not to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, not to do it at all. If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge ye . . . But what if a Bishop forbids this? . . . God being my helper, I will obey Him still, and, if I suffer for it, His will be done."

Either the Bishop did not reply to John or John failed to record his reply. Dimond says John was in error; that the College Fellowship did not give the right to preach in any part of England. (John resigned the fellowship in 1751 and still roamed England until 1791). Charles, who no doubt consulted with John about this, based his right to preach anywhere on the Master's degree, but this degree conferred only the right to teach—not to preach. Feeling they were divinely led, the Wesleys may have been a "law unto themselves."

The Conventicle Acts of 1662, 1664, and 1670 were in general an effort by force of law and penalties to make everyone worship in and according to the Church of England. They forbade assembling for worship in meeting houses, in homes, or in fields under severe personal and financial penalties. Constables, if denied admission, might summon a mob to break into a house. Sheriffs, with such assistance as they could get together, might dissolve or prevent meetings.

But England grew in grace. The Toleration Act of 1689 protected Dissenters in their worship, if they registered both their preachers and preaching places as such. The Riot Act of 1715 made it a felony to demolish or even to attempt to demolish any building registered as a Dissenting meeting-house.

But for some time in some places, these Acts seemed to be a dead letter or in dispute. When Charles Wesley and his brother tried to get an opinion from the Bishop about this, the latter testily and

evasively replied, "You can read the acts and laws as well as I. I determine nothing."

John argued to himself that the Conventicle Acts were designed against sedition and that Methodist meetings were not seditious. This probably led the Conference of 1745 to ask the question, "Is field preaching contrary to our profession?" and to answer: "It is not contrary to any law which we profess to obey." Magistrates seemed confused about the application of the law.

But field preaching and any unregistered meetings were contrary to the letter of the law. Protection under the Act of Toleration and the Riot Act was only for those "dissenting from the Church of England." The Wesleys were not Dissenters; on the contrary, they exhorted loyalty to the Church of England, of which their organizations were only "Societies." John especially was against any classification as "Dissenters" or any other such association. But he wanted that protection. He seemed to many then to want to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds. While this does not excuse the vicious mob attacks and lawless violence, it accounts for some of the inceptions of them. The common cry was, "You may treat them as you please, for there is no law for them."

Gradually, but not graciously, the Wesleys had to put their preachers and meeting-houses under the protection of these Acts. Charles was always against a separation from the Church, with John at least at first opposed to obtaining licenses, though both in the end had to yield.

At the Conference in Leeds in 1763 it was asked "Are we not Dissenters?" This was answered in part, "We are not Dissenters in the only sense which our law acknowledges . . . do not license yourself till you are constrained and then not as a Dissenter but as a Methodist preacher. It is time enough, when you are prosecuted, to take the oaths." The Wesleys tried to avoid the issue; John wrote that being called Dissenters in the certificates did not make them such. But increasingly their preachers had to seek that protection. After a legal consultation in 1787, John, reluctantly, had to consent to licensing; but in 1790 he wrote vigorous protests to the Bishop of London, also to William Wilberforce to get him to use his influence to get the law changed, since Methodists, as such, were liable and could be prosecuted and ruined under the Conventicle Act, and could get no relief from the Act of Toleration.

The way of these itinerant evangelists was not an easy one.

The Message

The Wesleys' main message came out of their own experience. They had been only slowly persuaded that justification or pardon or remission, therefore salvation, was not earned by what we may do but is solely a gift of God to those who will turn to Him and receive it. Any who try to save themselves must come to the same realization. Religion for them became something internal and personal. It did no longer consist mainly in observances: rites, such as Baptism and the Lord's Supper, were outward signs of an inner, actual relationship. No longer was religion to be found primarily in right opinions, in harmlessness, in being honest and just, in works of piety and charity, in Churchgoing. No longer was it merely acquiescence in a formal scheme or respectability in conduct. Now it was a direct relationship of the soul with God, an I-Thou fellowship, a "walking with God." Involved in it was a discerning of God and the things of God, gaining a spiritual perspective, and being inwardly right with God and therefore full of peace and joy. So they experienced; so they taught.

*"What we have seen and felt
With confidence we tell,—"*

So their first message was that which Böhler and the other Moravians taught them, which came to each in its full meaning in May 1738—"Justification by Faith", not by what we do but by acceptance of what was done for us by God in Christ. Paul had taught this distinctly; Luther recalled it; now the Wesleys revived it in a Church which merely formally acknowledged it.

They accepted an objective theory of Christ's death as purchasing our pardon from an inexorable God, as did practically all in that day. To us Charles may seem to emphasize the physical sufferings of Jesus and the "blood" too much. Indeed the Cross is still a great mystery: many are the "theories" to explain it, but all agree that it, as the culmination of the Incarnation, was a manifestation of God's love.

In that day of kings who could "do no wrong" and of little or no real democracy, God was too much a distant Deity, an absolute, unpredictable Monarch, sometimes an angry Power or a stern, mechanical Judge. No wonder the Wesley message of God as love was wel-

comed. Those today who were brought up so to think of God as a father can hardly understand such times. Love was the great Wesley message—God justified or pardoned men when they accepted His love as manifest in the very coming to earth of Christ but supremely shown in His death. This is what they meant by “Justification by Faith.” Charles sang of “The length, the breadth, the depth and height of Love Divine,” of “Love Divine, all loves excelling”—“Thy nature and Thy name is Love.”

The Wesleys, themselves Oxford graduates, had to deal with and use folks of little education and poor reasoning powers. Cautious Charles was more conscious of it than credulous John. The wonder is not that so many of their followers became erratic and left them, but that so many stayed with them. Some forsook, some they had to slough off, and many had to be recovered from their errors.

One source of trouble was in those who thought that “Justification by Faith” was *only* by Faith, that Christ saves us and that we ourselves have nothing to do with it; that He abolished the moral law and therefore that Christians are not obliged to observe it; who thought that their Christian liberty was freedom from obeying the commandments of God; that it is bondage to do a thing because it is commanded or to forego it because it is forbidden; and that unbelievers cannot do good works and believers need not. This may seem absurd to us, but it was a real peril then because only one facet was over-emphasized. This belief led some even to sanction immorality and to indulge in scandalous practices. John Wesley kept a sane balance: while he contended that a man was saved by faith and not by his works, his attitude was aptly expressed in his quotation from the poet Byron:

*“Nor steel nor flint alone produces fire,
Nor spark arises till they both conspire;
Nor faith alone, nor works without, is right;
Salvation rises when they both unite.”*

John wrote Charles that faith and works should be joined in all preaching, and they had the Conference declare that faith showed its results in how a man lived, and that we are saved not by the *merit* of “good works”—rather they are a *condition* of salvation. Charles was quite practical; in a letter of 1743 he wrote: “We certainly have been too rash and easy in allowing persons for believers upon their own testimony . . . Be not oversure that so many are justified. ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ You will see reason to be more and

more deliberate in the judgment you pass on persons—wait for their conversation.”

Even more dangerous and disruptive were those who would have folks be still, do nothing, and let God do it all. The Moravians had done much for Methodism. On shipboard, in Georgia, and in Europe the Wesleys came to admire their conduct and to love them for the way they lived. Böhler and others taught them their fundamental preaching. After the May, 1738, experiences, the Wesleys worked with them in the Moravian Fetter Lane Society. But extravagances started; and a kind of fanaticism, which was not in the Moravian creed but in perversion of it, crept in and became quite dangerous to the Wesley ideal. A young man, Molther, brought the controversy to a head in the teaching of “Stillness” or “Quietism”. Molther’s view was thus summed up: “As to the way of faith, you believe:—That the way to attain is to wait for Christ and be still, that is:—not to use (what we term) the means of grace; not to go to Church; not to communicate [commune]; not to fast; not to use much private prayer; not to read the Scriptures . . . not to do temporal good; not to attempt spiritual good.”

Unappealing as it is now, it was a very attractive heresy then. Probably it was a reaction from making observances and external use of the means of grace, the whole of religion—which was too generally the practice then. Many who had been actively with the Methodists were carried away by it—William Bray, James Hutton, and some clergymen such as Stonehouse and Grimshaw. Charles Wesley was suspected to be inclined to accept it, and John feared his brother was in danger. It was true that he was more appreciative of the Moravians’ lives; he loved and admired them as fellow-Christians while John was more aware of their doctrinal aberrations; but if Charles was misled, it was for only a brief period, for his sermons, his poems, and entries in his *Journal* violently opposed “Stillness”: “The unjustified, say they, are *to be still*; that is not . . . to endeavor; not to desire; for it is impossible to use means without trusting in them. Their practice is agreeable to their principles. Lazy and proud themselves, bitter and censorious toward others, they trample upon the ordinances and despise the commands of Christ.”

John’s common sense and practicality made him see the danger. After showing much patience and a long interview of the two Wesley brothers with Molther, they withdrew from the Fetter Lane Society and, taking a small minority with them, founded a new Society at The Foundery.

An even more subtle snare was what John called “Mysticism.” To

him it meant disparaging the means of grace, trying to get the ends without using the means, seeking a direct union with God beyond help from tangible instrumentalities. As Bishop McConnell has pointed out, mysticism is hard to define; it can be applied to almost anything religious. All forms of it, however, seem to believe in a direct communion of the soul with God, in the "inner life," and in the spirit of meditation and prayer, a kind of "sixth sense" realization of the Unseen.

In the sense now generally held, John Wesley was a mystic. He taught a union of the soul with God. But he saw the errors of many "mystics" of that day, including Law, to whom he owed much and who was called by Charles Wesley "our John the Baptist." John's vehemence against it was probably a reaction from the time when, as he admits, he was almost misled by it. Later he acknowledged he had been too hard on mysticism; but at this time he thought it to be in vague, mysterious language, to be too individual, to be out of keeping with the Atonement, to deprecate good works, to despise the ordinances, and to be associated with "Stillness." Charles, less practical, more personal, a man more of moods and heart, felt its finer appeal so strongly that the sentiment crept into many of his hymns. John revised it out of some, warned against others, and even denied a place in the most important hymnal to "Jesus, Lover of my soul." He said some of the "poison" was still in Charles.

The Wesleys were not "theologians," but they made a great contribution to theology in basing religion's central authority on experience as against tradition. Religion, we repeat, was to them a personal experience, as Charles wrote his daughter, Sarah, in 1778: "True religion consists in happiness and holiness; in peace and love; in the favor and image of God restored; in paradise regained; in a birth from above, a kingdom within you; a participation of the Divine nature."

To Charles religion was fellowshiping with God: "Fix in us Thy humble dwelling," an awareness of God, an encounter of the soul with God, with a friend and father—"me" the object of God's love. But to guard against individual aberrations and extravagances, the personal experience should be checked with Scriptures, with the experience of others in fellowship, and with the early Church and the Fathers.

Man's part in conversion was repentance and faith. Repentance meant a turning from doing evil to obedience to God, forgiving others, doing good, and using the means of grace. Faith was a personal acceptance of God's love, a sure confidence that Christ "loved me and

gave Himself for me," a resting down on his forgiveness and companionship, a becoming sure of spiritual realities. In the spiritual sphere it was like perception in the physical.

Much discussion took place about the instantaneousness or gradualness of the change. At first John was all for the former while Charles, although not denying the former, inclined toward gradualness. Even of his "conversion", his account says "*by degrees* He chased away the darkness of my unbelief." But with the Wesleys it was not so much how it came, but do you now have it?—as John put it in a letter in 1765: "It is all one how it began, so you do but walk in the light. Be this given in an instant or by degrees, hold it fast."

We should also remember the one great difference between their times and ours: the best folks then were not brought up to regard God as a Father, as a God of love, for they had little or no "religious education." The message of the Wesleys, which is congenial and even normal to us, was therefore strange news to most people of that day.

The Methodist message, in harmony with the preceding, had three simple features: (1) Everyone *may* be a child of God; (2) If you are a child of God, you *may* know it; (3) If you are a child of God, you *will* show it.

We are surprised that the first of these should be a point of emphasis, it now being so commonplace and so generally accepted. It was the Wesleys who made it so. But then the whole climate was extremely Calvinistic in the Church of England even more so with the Dissenters. We have seen how it divided Whitefield and the Wesleys. The controversy with others was even more violent. Calvinism's strength was in its emphasis on the all-inclusive sovereignty of God. But its speculative philosophy practically denied worth or power of choice to the individual. The Wesleys stood firmly for "freedom of man's will" and the responsibility of choosing. In an age of absolute monarchy and of privilege, Calvinism suited those who thought they were elected, but it damned the larger number. "The Potter and the Clay," a hymn ascribed to a Calvinist leader, contains this stanza,—

*"May not the sovereign Lord on high
Dispense his favours as he will
Chose some to live, while others die,
And yet be just and gracious still?"*

Calvinism's worst condemnation of itself was in Charles Wesley's quotation from John Calvin: "God speaketh to them, that they may be the deafer; he gives light to them, that they may be blinder; he offers

instruction to them, that they may be the more ignorant, and uses the remedy, that they may not be healed."

John Wesley summed it up thus: "Call it by whatever name you please, Election, Preterition, Predestination or Reprobation, it comes to the same thing. The sense is plainly this: By virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, one part of mankind are infallibly saved and the rest infallibly damned; it is impossible that any of the former should be damned or that any of the latter should be saved."

John's sermon on "Free Grace" dealt devastatingly with "election", but Charles' hymns were even more effectively devastating among the masses. Indeed, Charles has been represented by some as more hostile to Calvinism than John. How the Wesleyan message must have brought hope and joy to thousands who thought previously that they were hopelessly damned! Weatherhead says an old divine well summed up the Methodist position. "The elect man is whosoever will; the damned man is whosoever won't."

Charles could be controversial and vehement, though he rarely was. Calvinism provoked his muse. His irony boils forth in

*"To damn for falling short
Of what they could not do,
For not believing the report
Of that which was not true."*

In a satirical poem, "The Cry of a Reprobate", he added:

*"I could the Devil's law receive,
Unless restrain'd by Thee;
I could, (good God!) I could believe
The HORRIBLE DECREE.*

*I could believe that God is Hate
The God of Love and Grace
Did damn, pass by and reprobate
The most of human race.*

*Farther than this I cannot go,
Till Tophet takes me in; . . ."*

*"Go, wretched soul, to meet thy doom;
Then neither canst escape nor fly;
The day, the fatal day, is come
And thou with all thy hopes must die.*

*I hasten where the deepest hell
Is moved to meet me from beneath,
Where damn'd apostate spirits yell
And gnaw their tongues, and gnash their teeth."*

But Charles' chief contribution was positive and constructive: God's free grace, love, and offer to all appear in hundreds of his hymns:

*"He left His Father's throne above—
So free, so infinite His grace—
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race;
'Tis mercy all, immense and free!
For, O my God, it found out me!*

*"O! if thy spirit send me forth
The meanest of the throng,
I'll sing thy Grace divinely free,
And teach Mankind the song.*

*Grace will I sing, through Jesus' Name,
On all Mankind bestow'd . . ."*

*"Come, sinners, to the gospel feast
Let every soul be Jesus' guest;
Ye need not one be left behind,
For God has bidden all mankind.*

*Sent by my Lord, on you I call
The invitation is to ALL . . ."*

*"For every man he tasted death
He suffer'd once for ALL;
He calls as many souls as breathe
And all may hear the Call."*

And from his "Songs of Everlasting Love," the members of the Societies rejoiced with him:

*"Whose grace to all did freely move,
And sent Him down a world to save.*

*To praise the Lamb who died for all,
The general Saviour of mankind.*

*A world He suffered to redeem
For all he hath the atonement made."*

Though of little moment now, Calvinism was a hot issue then. John often said he disliked controversy, but his logic-trained mind was good at it. He always kept his temper and usually wrote as a Christian gentleman and scholar. But this discussion profoundly stirred him, and he wrote about "the fierce, unclean, brutish, blasphemous Antinomianism." There is a question, however, whether the condemned sarcasm, logic, and good spirit of Charles' hymns were not more potent than John's pointed prose.

After the trouble with Whitefield, the cudgels for Election were taken up by Augustus Toplady. For a while he attended Charles' old school, Westminster. But ill health drove him to Ireland, where he was converted in a Methodist meeting, about which he says: "Strange that I, who had so long sat under the means of grace in England, should be brought nigh to God in an obscure part of Ireland, amidst a handful of God's people met together in a barn, and under the ministry of one who could hardly spell his name." In his controversy over Predestination he appears bumptious, self-confident, intolerant, even contemptuous, of those opposing him. His bitterness, wrath, and rancor are hard to reconcile with his real love for his Lord and with his authorship of "Rock of Ages", which, though in part written to support his theology, has been sung much by Methodists.

John was provocative; he abridged one of Toplady's pamphlets and added,—"The sum of all this is,—One in twenty (suppose) of mankind is elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. Reader, believe this or be damned. Witness my hand, A—— T——." This infuriated Toplady, who became very scurrilous and epithetical. He entitled one article against John Wesley "An Old Fox, Tarred and Feathered." John was stung and wrote: "Mr. August Toplady I know well. But I do not fight with chimney-sweepers. He is too dirty a writer for me to meddle with. I should only foul my fingers."; and a few years later: "As to reviewers, news-writers, *London Magazines*, and all that kind of gentlemen, they behave just as I expected they would. And let them lick up Mr. Toplady's spittle still, a champion worthy of their cause."

Rowland Hill, and his brother Richard, later Sir Richard, vied with Toplady in manifesting virulence and hatred unalloyed. They accused the two Wesleys of using such expressions as, "Devil's factors—Satan's synagogue—Children of the old roaring, hellish murdered, who be-

believes his lie — Advocates of sin — Witnesses for the father of lies — Blasphemers — Satan-sent Preachers — Devils — Liars — Fiends.” They called John “Pope John,” “little John,” “a designing wolf,” “a dealer in stolen wares,” “as unprincipled as a rook and as silly as a jackdaw,” “a gray-headed enemy of all righteousness,” “a venal profligate,” “the most rancorous hater of the Gospel,” “a low and puny tadpole in divinity,” etc.

Truth and decency in no way inhibited their venomousness. John said they defended election ‘with arguments worthy of Bedlam and language worthy of Billingsgate.’ They were, however, convinced they were right. Said Toplady once: “I much question whether the man that dies an Arminian can go to heaven.” These three used every accusation against the Wesleys such as plagiarism in *A Calm Address to the American Colonies* and his forgetfulness regarding a certain book. They used the stolen, doctored letters from John’s estranged wife and accused both the Wesleys of many crimes and misdemeanors. Controversy was not nice in those days.

John, disgusted, left the serious features of the argument to Fletcher of Madeley, a Genevan by birth, an ordained clergyman of the Church of England, who was for a while a kind of Curate to Charles Wesley and later head of Lady Huntington’s College until his anti-Calvinism led to an honorable dismissal. He was saintly, devout, pious, and humble. Much has been said for him, nothing even alleged against him. With a style accurate and eloquent, with a logic keen and unanswerable, with illustrations apt and apropos, and withal with a spirit and temper benign and tender, he exposed and disposed of Calvinism and Antinomianism in a series of able publications, still acclaimed as the greatest on that subject.

During their preparation Fletcher had much correspondence with Charles. He submitted all publications to Charles and asked him to expunge anything that would give unnecessary pain, to pay special attention to their grammar and theology, and later to see to their going through the press. Apparently, Fletcher appreciated Charles scholarship as much as John did.

“KNOW IT”

The second main message of the Wesleys was this: “If you are a child of God, you may know it.”

They were led to the doctrine of assurance, or Witness of the Spirit, by various individuals of the Moravians who started them seeking but left them mixed up. In the early development of this teaching, both Wesleys were vague while seemingly definite. At first

they regarded it as necessary to salvation, to peace and joy. It grew mainly out of their personal experiences of May, 1738, Charles' "Day of Pentecost" and John's "Aldersgate". John defined it in prose as "an inward impression on the soul whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses with my spirit that I am a child of God, that Jesus loved me, and gave himself for me and that all my sins are blotted out and I, even I, am reconciled to God." This was, in other words, a God-given confidence of forgiveness of sins and acceptance by God, a divine consciousness of dealings of the individual with God, a certainty of spiritual things unseen. To John it was to know spiritually as we know physically that the body is alive or that the sun is shining. He based it on two passages of Scriptures—Romans 8:16, "The same Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God"; and Galatians 4:6-7, "Because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying Abba, Father . . . no more a bond servant but a son." But John did not always understand the full context. Scripture was to him, as to practically all in that day, a matter of proof texts; little or nothing was the realization of "progressive revelation."

Much of the doctrine grew mainly out of the two experiences of May, 1736. Experience is always personal to the individual experiencing, as Bishop McConnell puts it: "Aldersgate lent itself to interpretations Wesley never intended and helped raise in many a Methodist mind expectations of strange warmings in themselves destined never to be realized." Few, if any, have had exactly John's conviction and experience.

Charles' mind was simpler than John's; the latter went more to theology and fine distinctions in experience; John botanized a flower, Charles smelt it. Thus they differed somewhat on the meaning and use of terms and interpretation of experience. In general Charles saw it as a whole; John, piecemeal. Charles expressed his sense of certainty in poetry:

*"Then with my heart I first believed,
Believed with faith divine;
Power with the Holy Ghost received
To call the Saviour mine."*

*"I felt my Lord's atoning blood
Close to my soul applied;
Me, me, He loved—the Son of God—
For me, for me, He died!"*

*"My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear,
He owns me for his child;
I can no longer fear;
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And 'Father, Abba, Father' cry."*

In his experience of the "Day of Pentecost" he had testified, "should know, should feel, my sins forgiven." Again he refers to that day:

*"Joyless is the day's return
Till Thy mercy's beams I see,
Till Thou inward light impart,
Glad my eyes and warm my heart."*

*"Still the small inward voice I hear,
That whispers all my sins forgiven."*

His familiar testimony was that "His Spirit answers to the blood and tells me I am born of God."

The similarity of John's and Charles' testimonies was in part due to their frequent consultations and exchange of experiences. Charles, characteristically, wanted to square this doctrine with the teachings of his Church. In a sermon in 1742 at Oxford he said: "Our own excellent church . . . speaks plainly of 'feeling the Spirit of Christ,' of being 'moved by the Holy Ghost' and knowing and feeling there is no other name than that of Jesus, whereby we can receive life and salvation. She teaches us all to pray for the 'inspiration of the Holy Ghost.' Nay, and every Presbyterian of hers professes to receive the Holy Ghost by the imposition of hands. Therefore, to deny any of these, is, in effect, to renounce the Church of England, as well as the whole Christian revelation."

The teaching is fundamentally based on the fact that "Spirit with spirit can meet," but the exact experience of one should not be the required experience of another. Since people are different, experiences therefore will differ. Those times and especially that teaching will differ from ours. The idea that an individual could have a personal relation to God and know God as a God of love, a forgiving Father, is almost commonplace to us, but it burst as new and wonderful on the eighteenth-century mind. Samuel Johnson was the leading literary man of that day and a devout Christian. Bishop Butler was the leading theologian. Both gave clear evidence of the general acceptance of the doctrine of election and the individual's uncertainty of salvation.

Boswell says that Dr. Johnson "never had a moment in which death

was not terrible to him" and records the following conversation:

"Johnson said 'As I cannot be *sure* that I have fulfilled the conditions on which salvation is granted, I am afraid I may be one of those who shall be damned.' Boswell, in spite of Johnson's 'uttering this passionately and loudly', ventured to say, 'But may not a man attain to such a degree of hope as not to be uneasy from the fear of death?' 'A man may have such a degree of hope' said Johnson 'as to keep him quiet. You see I am not quiet from the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not despair.' Here Mrs. Adams said 'You seem, sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer.' Johnson answered, 'Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has said He will set some on His right hand and some on His left.' Then 'in gloomy agitation' he exclaimed 'I'll have no more on't.'"

Bishop Butler, whose *Analogy* it has been shrewdly stated gives every argument for religion except the argument from experience, had conversation with his Chaplain on his deathbed. Said the Bishop: "Though I have endeavored to avoid sin, and to please God to the utmost of my power, yet from consciousness of perpetual infirmities, I am still afraid to die." The Chaplain said, "My Lord, you have forgotten that Jesus Christ is a Saviour." "True," said Butler, "but how shall I know that He is a Saviour for me?" "My Lord," the Chaplain said, "It is written *Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.*" "True," said the dying prelate, "and I am surprised that, though I have read that Scripture I suppose a thousand times over, I never felt its virtue till this moment. And now I die happy."

The Wesleys' doctrine of the Witness of the Spirit especially excited the "lunatic fringe," who testified to ocular demonstrations, dreams, and other extraordinary signs. John admitted: "Many have mistaken the voice of their own imagination for this witness of the Spirit of God." Emphasis on the individual consciousness had its dangers; it invited special feelings, unhealthy subjectism, and extravagances.

Calvinism, in its belief in unconditional election, held assurance to be of final salvation; the Wesleys, on the contrary, taught that assurance was only of *present* salvation and that it could be lost. Indeed, according to John, it might not continue clear, even if in a state of salvation. He said, "Some have felt no agonies at all, no anxious fears, no sense of dereliction; others have."

It would be erroneous to fasten irrevocably and unchanged any belief at any one stage on the Wesleys. In 1768 John wrote: "You charge me . . . with maintaining contradictions. I answer,—If all my sentiments were compared . . . from the year 1725 to 1768, there would

be truth in the charge; for during the latter part of this period I have relinquished several of my former sentiments. During these last thirty years, I may have varied in some of my sentiments without observing it." And again in later years: "When I was young I was *sure* of everything. In a few years . . . I was not half so sure of most things as before. At present I am hardly sure of anything, but what God has revealed to man." Entries in John's *Journal* of his early experience—"never myself converted" and "I am a child of wrath"—bore the maturer marginal comments—"I am not sure of this", "I believe not." In other words, he grew.

At first the brothers preached that the witness was necessary to salvation and that all true Christians should have it. Then in 1761, John wrote, "We believe a man may be a real Christian without being assured of his salvation." Two years later he further wrote, "I have not, for many years, thought a consciousness of acceptance to be essential to justifying faith." And, in his old age he wrote to Melville Horne: "When fifty years ago my brother Charles and I, in the simplicity of our hearts, told the people of England, that unless they *knew* their sins were forgiven, they were under the wrath and curse of God, I marvel, Melville, they did not stone us! The Methodists, I hope, know better now; we preach assurance as we always did as a common privilege of the children of God, but we do not enforce it, under the pain of damnation, denounced on all who enjoy it not." While in early years he taught assurance as coming by crisis instantaneously, later he allowed exemptions and then felt that some might get it gradually.

The Wesleys did insist that the inward and the outward witness were inseparable and that the reality of the inward experience was attested by manifesting the fruits of the spirit—that is, by a life of goodness.

It is hard to reconcile the Aldersgate experience of 1738 with a statement of John to a correspondent in 1761: "I never had a clear abiding witness that I was saved from sin"; nor with that in an intimate letter to Charles in 1766: "If I (ever had) *that faith* it would not be so strange. But (I never had) other *elegchos* [evidence] of the eternal or invisible world than (I have) now; and that is (none at all) unless such as fairly shines from reason's glimmering ray. (I have no) direct witness, I do not say that (I am a child of God) . . . And yet I dare not preach otherwise than I do."

Why did he preach it? Because of the Scriptural warrant and the testimonies evoked by his preaching? Was he following in this Böhler's advice regarding faith—"Preach it until you have it"?

Thousands apparently had an emotional experience of sonship, but it was dangerous to encourage special feeling, as John said in a sermon in his maturer years: "Nearly fifty years ago the preachers were not apprized of the difference between a servant and a child of God. They did not clearly understand that everyone who feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him. In consequence they were apt to make sad the hearts of those whom God had not made sad."

Also many sought with despair for an emotional definiteness. Many, like John and Charles, can point to an exact date; others just as good and devout cannot so point. Some of the finest and best laymen of today lay no claim to a personal divine revelation; and many who have had something of that kind, say nothing about it because they regard it as too personal. Samuel Sr. had such; so did Dr. Annesley, Susanna's father, but they did not preach it.

Moreover, there was a tendency to make all experiences conform to a type and to seek to have one's own be the typical or standard experience. Some testimonies in the *Arminian Magazine* directly admit this. As has been said, individual experiences are as different as individuals, and God fulfills himself in many ways. John recognized this and in his maturer years wrote a correspondent in a letter of 1785:

"There is an irreconcilable variability in the operation of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men, more especially as to the manner of justification. Many find Him rushing upon them like a torrent, while they experience

"The o'erwhelming power of saving grace."

This has been the experience of many; but in others He works in a very different way:

*"He deigns His influence to infuse
Sweet, refreshing, as the silent dews!"*

It pleased Him to work the latter way in you from the beginning; and it is not improbable He will continue (as He has begun) to work in a gentle and almost insensible manner. Let Him take His own way; He is wiser than you; He will do all things well."

To many today real penitence, faith, and surrender bring a satisfying sense of pardon and peace. To many it may seem only negative, exclusion of fear, turmoil, and tension, the reverse of joy and peace.

As the Wesleys would word it,—Is God a reality to you? Not *how* you first experienced Him, but do you experience Him now? Are you on good terms with Him? Do you have dealings with Him, a God-you relationship?

"SHOW IT"

The third Wesley emphasis was "If you are a child of God, you will show it,"—show it by a change where necessary or by a life appropriate. Wesley had in mind moral considerations, living as one ought, "walking with Him."

But early they were led by the Scriptures to a nomenclature which caused controversy. At Oxford in 1729 John said, "My brother and I read the Bible, saw inward and outward holiness therein, followed after and incited others so to do." Reading Kempis' *Christian Pattern*, Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*, and Law's *Serious Call* and *Christian Perfection* furthered their thinking. Five years before Aldersgate, John preached holiness at Oxford. It became their life passion. In a preface to a hymn book in 1752, John set forth what "to this day my brother and I maintained."

At the conference in 1765 John stated: "God thrust me and my brother out, utterly against our will, to raise a holy people. Holiness was our point—inward and outward holiness."

The terms, "Perfection" and "Holiness", are perhaps unfortunate; generally they are associated with a flawless God and not with weak man. John says, "I have no particular fondness for the terms," but he consistently used them because they were Scriptural.

Charles and John tried to keep together on this experience. They had agreed in early conferrings what they would teach; but both were honest and their ideas became somewhat different. In 1762 John wrote Charles, giving some thoughts on Christian Perfection: "because it may be a means of our understanding each other clearly, that we may agree as far as ever we can and then let the world know it"; and a few years later: "Unless you and I stand in the gap in real earnest . . . will you set shoulder to shoulder?" Next month he again wrote Charles, "I think it is high time that you and I should come to the point, shall we go on asserting perfection? . . . I am weary of intestine war, of preachers quoting one of us against the other." Apparently they were drifting apart.

John based their teaching (1) on Scripture: "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" and the many other biblical exhortations to be holy; (2) on the testimonies of experience by his followers. The usual positive definition of perfection, holiness, sanctification or perfect love was loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. This meant giving "the whole heart and life to God", having "the mind that was in Christ", walking as Christ walked, being pure and pitiful.

In his translation of Tersteegen's hymn, John pays tribute to its source, "Thou hidden love of God, whose depth unfathomed, no man knows," (which, by the way, Emerson said was the finest hymn in the English language). When asked for his own testimony regarding Christian perfection, John replied by quoting Charles' verse:

*"O, grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell but Thy pure love alone;
O, may thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure and my crown!
Strange flames far from my heart remove;
My every act, word, thought, be Love."*

Charles sang it:

*Jesus, thy all victorious love
Shed in my heart abroad;
Then shall my feet no longer rove,
Rooted and fix'd in God.*

*Refining fire, go through my heart;
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter thy life through every part,
And sanctify the whole.*

*No longer then my heart shall mourn,
While, purified by grace,
I only for His glory burn,
And always see His face.*

*My steadfast soul, from falling free,
Can then no longer move,
Jesus is all the world to me,
And all my heart is love.*

John seemed to fluctuate and be inconsistent as he changed or modified his views on this subject. At one time it was a present attainment for him, at another a future ideal to be realized at the moment of death. At different times he regarded it as instantaneous, gradual, or both! He talked for sinlessness, then against it. For a time he believed in the impossibility of falling but later said we could fall from it. He acknowledged these inconsistencies, for he was honest and guileless. In 1767 he wrote to Charles: "Is there not instantaneous sanctification between justification and death? I say Yes; you (*often seem to*) say No. What arguments brought you to think so? Perhaps

they may convince me too. Nay, there is one question more, if you allow there is such a thing,—Can anyone who has attained it fall? Formerly I thought not but you . . . convinced me of my mistake.”

And in 1771 he wrote the Countess of Huntington: “There may be opinions maintained at the same time which are not exactly true; and who can be secure from these? Perhaps I thought myself so once; when I was younger than I am now, I thought myself almost infallible, but I bless God I know myself better now.” He had written Walker of Truro in 1757 that he was “sometimes much discouraged” at finding so little in himself “of the *mind* that was in Christ, the Image of God” stamped upon the heart.

His *Journal* for December 25, 1744 read: “About eight, being with two or three that believed in Jesus, I felt such an awe and tender sense of the presence of God as greatly confirmed me therein; so that God was before me all the day long. I sought and found Him in every place . . .” And in a letter to Dr. Dodd, dated March 12, 1756, he wrote, after defining the meaning of Perfection, “I must still aver they [my words] speak both my own experience and that of many hundred children of God whom I personally know,” yet he also wrote, in a letter published in Lloyd’s *Evening Post* in March, 1767, “I have told all the world I am not perfect . . . I tell you flat, I have not attained the character I draw.”

Practically all his biographers agree that John did not claim perfection for himself, and his silence is significant. Yet he exhorted those experiencing it to testify to it. Did he omit the two words “and felt” making the couplet to read,—“What we have seen with confidence we tell”? In a sermon written October 7, 1787, and published in his *Arminian Magazine* of July-August, 1788, John Wesley’s thesis was that clergy can convey grace by the means of grace, even when they do not receive the grace of God themselves.

At times John grew discouraged. All the preachers did not preach it, some over-preached it, and some professed but did not live up to it. His *Journal* reveals this discouragement in 1766: “On a close examination, out of more than fifty persons who, two or three years ago, were filled with the love of God, I did not find above a third part who had not suffered loss.”

From Ireland, less than two months later, he wrote: “I am afraid (Christian) perfection should be forgotten . . . A general faintness, in this respect, is fallen upon this whole kingdom. Sometimes I seem almost weary of striving against the stream both of preachers and people . . .”

Another letter of March 1770 stated: “Although many taste of that

heavenly gift, deliverance from inbred sin, yet so few, so exceedingly few, retain it one year, hardly one in ten, nay one in thirty. Many hundreds in London were made partakers of it within sixteen or eighteen months; but I doubt whether twenty of them are now as holy and as happy as they were. And hence others had doubted whether God *intended that salvation* to be enjoyed long. That many have it for a season, that they allow, but are not satisfied that any retain it always."

To Charles he wrote intimately and at times querulously: "I am at my wits end with regard to two things,—the Church and Christian Perfection. Unless you and I stand in the gap in *good earnest*, the Methodists will drop them both." And a month later: "Shall we go on in asserting perfection against all the world? Or shall we quietly let it drop? We really must do one or the other; and, I apprehend, the sooner the better." In 1772 again he wrote to Charles: "I find almost all our preachers in every circuit have done with Christian perfection. They say they believe it; but never preach it, or not once in a quarter. What is to be done? Shall we let it drop, or make a point of it?"

John's ripened view seemed to be, as set forth in a letter to Charles written January, 1767, and published in his *Arminian Magazine* in March, 1783:

"1. By Perfection I mean, the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions.

"I do not include an impossibility of falling from it, either in part or in whole . . .

"And I do not contend for the term *sinless*, though I am not against it.

"2. As to the manner. I believe this Perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of Faith; consequently in an instant. But I believe a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant.

"3. As to the time. I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before . . ."

John's language was "loose" because at times he seemed uncertain regarding the process; but he persisted consistently, almost stubbornly.

Also he modified the ideal. There were degrees, he came to believe, in perfection; it could grow and be improved. Since we have to live in a corruptible body with imperfect bodily organs, we will make "mistakes both speculative and practical," have defects "of knowledge, judgment, and temperament," will think, speak and act

wrong, "be subject to a thousand nervous disorders," and have to "say daily 'Forgive us our trespasses'."

To several he cautioned against "setting perfection too high." True, he did refer incidentally to sins of omission. If he had the conception of this day about social solidarity, our inextricable relation to others and the duties involved therein, he would have qualified his definition of Perfection still more and probably queried how and to what extent Christians can be perfect in an imperfect society.

In short, he taught a *relative* Perfection, an imperfect perfection, the best possible under the circumstances, but subject to ignorance, infirmity, and mistake.

Charles differed somewhat from John. He too modified and vacillated; indeed he seemed to be of two somewhat diverse opinions at once. This may have been due to his desire to be at one with John or to conflicts in his own experience.

The witnesses, by their testimonies, impressed John. He preached it because they so testified; they sought it because he preached it. Some found and maintained; some found and lost; some merely thought they had found. Some alienated Charles by their inconsistent lives as well as by extravagances and foolish notions, for which, of course, John was not to blame. Some, John wrote, "made the very name of Perfection to stink in the nostrils" and "have given it a deeper wound than all its enemies together could do." Charles especially reacted against the lack of humility in many professors and wrote:

*"The purest saint that lives below
Doth his own sanctity disclaim;
The wisest owns I nothing know,
The holiest cries, I nothing am!"*

*"When'er Thou dost Thy grace bestow
Lest proudly I the blessing show,
A second grace impart,
'Tell it to none' with vain delight
'Tell it to none'—in mercy write
Upon my broken heart."*

Charles and John had different kinds of perfection in mind. To Charles perfection was PERFECTION and holiness was HOLINESS. His was an absolute; John's was a relative. John wrote Charles: "That perfection which I believe, I can boldly preach, because I think I see five hundred witnesses of it. Of *that* perfection which you preach, you do not even think you see any witness at all . . . There is *no such*

perfection here as *you describe*—at least, I never met with an instance of it; and I doubt I never shall. Therefore I still think to set perfection so *high* is effectually to renounce it.”

There was no question about the finality which Charles felt we should seek and which he sought:

*“He wills that I should holy be:
That holiness I long to feel,
That full Divine conformity
To all my Saviour’s righteous will.”*

*“Heavenly Adam, Life Divine,
Change my nature into Thine;
Move and spread throughout my soul,
Actuate and fill the whole;
Be it I no longer now,
Living in the flesh, but Thou.”*

Charles, however, inclined more and more to believe it came gradually after a long discipline. Wrote he,

*“That heavenly principle within
Doth it at once its power exert,
At once rout out the seed of sin
And spread perfection through the heart?
No; but a gradual life it sends,
Diffusive through the faithful soul,
To actions, words and thoughts extends,
And slowly sanctifies the whole.
’Tis not a sudden stroke of grace
Destroys at once the cursed race,
When first to Christ we come;
But by degrees insensible
The Lord shall all our sins expel,
And utterly consume.”*

For him it did not come fully until death, though he could never wholly give up John’s idea that for some it might come earlier, even be instantaneous through faith—but not for him. He sought it all his life unceasingly:

*“What is our calling’s glorious hope
But inward holiness?
For this to Jesus I look up,
I calmly wait for this.”*

*"Till death Thy endless mercies seal,
And make my sacrifice complete."*

Charles expected to be like Him only when he saw Him face to face.

John had said to Bishop Gibson that there was nothing irrational nor unscriptural in his idea of perfection. Given his definition of sin, "the *voluntary* transgression of a *known* law," and his allowance for the physical body by which we are limited, (and, if he lived today, by the social body), his system is logically defensible.

In a sermon in 1787 John said: "Those now really perfect in love . . . are still encompassed with infirmities. They may be dull of apprehension; they may have a natural heedlessness, or a treacherous memory; they may have too lively an imagination; and any of these may cause little improprieties, either in speech or behaviour . . . which are really *involuntary*."

Both taught that if anyone is a child of God, he will show it,—that is, the Christian will live his religion and not rest on his oars. Both taught that the child of God must strive for a higher attainment. John found that where the higher state was not preached, the people grew cold and lost religion. Of course they did. Religion must constantly progress; there is not a once-for-all blessed state, as too many in that day believed. Both agree on going on toward higher and better levels. The great thing is the *going on*. This teaching helped turn England upside down and produced a moral revolution.

Both sought and taught *the highest, the most and best possible with God's help*.

Many Methodists and others have tried to follow John to a relative perfection, an attainment which must not only constantly be maintained, but grow more and more, rise higher and higher.

But more have been followers of Charles, regarding perfection and holiness as absolutes, an ideal which is unattainable on earth but toward which there should be a constant, increasing approximation until we become like Him when we see Him as He is. So they sing and pray with him, "Fix in us thy humble dwelling"; "Enter every trembling heart"; "Let us find the promised rest"; "Take away our bent to sinning";

*"Finish then Thy new creation,
Pure, and spotless let us be,"*

and

*"O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free,*

*A heart that always feels Thy blood,
So freely shed for me!*

*A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's throne;
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.*

*An humble, lowly, contrite heart,
Believing, true, and clean,
Which neither life nor death can part
From Him that dwells within.*

*A heart in every thought renew'd,
And full of love Divine,
Perfect and right, and pure, and good,
A copy, Lord, of Thine!*

*Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
Come quickly, from above,
Write Thy new Name upon my heart
Thy new, best Name of Love."*

Yes. Charles Wesley's hymns are the more common expression of Methodist belief and hope. Professor Winchester, a saintly layman, represented thinking Methodist laymen when he wrote: "It is not necessary to think there was any essential contradiction in the views of the two brothers. It is possible to hold that the most normal way of reaching any high moral or spiritual condition is by the gradual education of effort and obedience, while at the same time we may admit that, in many instances, some sudden access of truth or feeling may lift a man from a lower to a higher plane of spiritual life, which he maintains thereafter. Yet it must be admitted that such a doctrine is peculiarly open to misinterpretation by a hasty enthusiasm. It is probably wiser to insist only on the duty of a healthy Christian life to strive constantly after higher attainments, rather than to encourage efforts, that are likely to be spasmodic, after some special and sudden perfection."

The influence of the eighteenth century as contrasted with that of the present century is seen in two tendencies not unrelated. The first is to regard and treat sin as a thing, a thing to be cut out. Both modern theology and modern psychology would differ. The second is to regard salvation as a *state*. John Wesley with his keen insight saw this danger and had recorded in the Minutes of the 1770 Conference:

"Does not talking of a justified or sanctified state tend to mislead men? Almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in one moment? Whereas we are every hour and every moment pleasing or displeasing to God, 'according to our works,' according to the whole of our inward tempers and outward behaviour."

For us, as for John and Charles, religion consists not in anything static, but in a continuing and growing *relationship* or as worded by Scougal, read by Susanna, John, and Charles Wesley, and also by George Whitefield, "the *life* of God in the soul of man."

Co-Workers

John and Charles were a great team. They were about the same height, both short, with Charles a little heavier than lean wiry John. They were together at Epworth when John was four to ten years of age and Charles from birth until six years of age. They were in London at the same time, though in different schools, for about six years; they were both at Oxford, though in different colleges, for about seven years. Both were significant individuals. John lived 1703-1791, and Charles 1707-1788.

Before 1738 both were High Churchmen, scrupulously observant of rites and ceremonies, ascetic in conduct, ruthlessly introspective, and evangelists of a kind. After 1738 they had equally as their supreme object to "save souls", to combat sin, to regenerate England, to "promote as far as able vital practical religion, and, by the grace of God to beget, preserve and increase the life of God in the souls of men." For these objects they knew no sacrifices too great, no obstacle too unyielding, no opposition too intense. For them ideals were to be translated into life. They both were indefatigable evangelists of a new order.

For nearly eighteen years they were closer to each other than ordinary brothers. Though both were strong personalities with different characteristics, they acted together and were strangely as one. They were close to each other with a friendship unusual and inviolable, yet more—they loved each other with more than ordinary brotherly love. John said Charles was his own soul; Charles called John "the desire of my eyes." John, sensing this strange relationship, once said "For a wife and a partner, you and I may challenge the world together," while Charles referred to themselves as those "whom God hath joined together." They differed on some things, of course, but were frank and open with one another, were grateful for reproof, each delighting in the other's excellencies. John could playfully call Charles "you simpleton", and Charles in John's old age wrote his wife Sally with pride about our "youthful brother."

They had long talks and often "took sweet counsel" together. These many long interviews partly explain the otherwise strange oneness in belief, experience, and method. Though in later life they differed

seriously, their love and loyalty to each other persisted to the last. Charles could dispute with John but would fly to his defense if others attacked him. After Charles' death, the usually self-possessed John lined out to a congregation his brother's hymn, and, coming to the words

*"My company is gone before
And I am left alone with Thee,"*

stopped, covered his face, and wept.

At Oxford, as later, they took long walks together, conversing, praying, and singing as they went, and often read to each other; and once they broke out together into hysterical laughter. Together they visited and corresponded with attractive young ladies near Oxford. Both were great scholars, held Master of Arts degrees from Oxford, wrote to each other sometimes partly in Greek, and conversed between themselves and with others in Latin. Indeed Charles could recite hundreds of lines of Virgil from memory, as he did once more or less facetiously to rout a boor. Both were aristocrats and Tories but never showed any consciousness of social superiority; they were all things to all men. Both read Law's *Serious Thoughts* to themselves and to others; both talked, together and separately, with Law and Böhler, and with strikingly the same reactions. A fellow-member of the Holy Club says of their likeness: "Could I describe one of them, I should describe both." Similar personal evangelical experiences came to them. They held and proclaimed the same doctrines against opposition and misunderstandings. They stood together when several serious splits rent their Societies.

Sometimes they worked as one, traveling together and preaching alternately; sometimes they deliberately divided the work, interchanging fields of labor. Both became gradually extempore in prayer and preaching. Exuberance and a sense of mission drove them to field preaching. Both established Societies, examining them together or separately. They agreed on Rules for admission of workers and acted together in disciplining or expelling members or ministers. They administered as one; John's *Journal* records "my brother and I" innumerable times. Together they "closed" the first Conference where Charles had preached the opening sermon. The Minutes of the first several Conferences were published under the title, "Conversations Between Reverend Messrs. John and Charles Wesley and Others." They consulted together about the Rules for admission to the Societies and, after revision, published them with both names signed. They opened the school at Kingswood together and made appeals, like that

to the Mayor and Corporation of Bristol, in the name of both. John probably spoke more truly than he realized when he wrote their sister, "What my brother does, I do." Together they appeared and argued before Bishops and Archbishops. When accused or attacked, they would warmly defend each other; when either was seriously ill, the other was soon by his side; when one preached at Oxford, the other was praying and leading in organized prayer for him. Deeds to property bore both names and provided for their joint or successive rule.

Publications were often issued in both names; indeed the first "Hymn Book" in England did not disclose which wrote which hymns. Both read Bengel and other books on which the famous *Wesley's Notes* were based, in part a paraphrase; and they spent many days together on the manuscript thereof. Together they revised some of John's writings and Charles' hymns; in fact, we cannot know how much Charles revised the former nor John the latter.

They could differ and yet yield to one another; Charles did not share John's pet aversion regarding the use of tea but for a while abstained to please; John did not wholly approve of a special seat in their chapels for Lady Huntingdon but said, "On this point I yield to my brother's judgment." When asked by John to examine some classes, Charles wrote in his diary, "I took up my cross, to oblige my brother."

Neither was lured by money. Charles not only turned down an offer of wealth, name, and luxury in Ireland, as already mentioned, but also refused a lucrative appointment in the Church of England and a handsome legacy from a rich lady. Nor would he take contributions proffered by others. He specified nothing should come to him or his family from his wife's rich family. When assuming family obligations, he took a wife from that large comfortable home with only an agreement of £100 a year, much less than his hymns would bring in, and much less than enough for an average degree of comfort. The Wesleys drew from the general fund of the Church no more than a meagre allowance for bare living and traveling expenses. Neither left any estate. John's reply to the Tax Commissioners' inquiry of his silver holdings is well known: "Sir,—I have *two* silver teaspoons at *London* and *two* at *Bristol*. This is all the plate which I have at present; and I shall not buy any more while so many round me want bread. I am, sir, your most humble servant."

John's poem expresses the spirit of both:

"No foot of land do I possess

No cottage in the wilderness
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Nothing on earth I call my own
A stranger, to the world unknown,
I all their goods despise.
I trample on their whole delight,
And seek a country out of sight
A country in the skies."

No one ever questioned their honesty. Charles' scrupulousness is well illustrated in an item on the ledger of Mr. William Strahan, a printer, in May, 1755:

"Mr. Charles Wesley	
"Poem to his brother, 1000 more	14 - 0
"2 reams paper for do	1 - 8 - 0
"Owing of a former account quite forgot by me but remembered by him"	1 - 14 - 0
	3 - 16 - 0

In 1788 a questionable balance of a small amount of many years' standing was demanded of Charles by a music dealer. The poet remitted at once, saying, "If there is the least doubt, Mr. Wesley always takes the safest, that is, his neighbor's side; choosing to pay a bill twice or twenty times, rather than not at all." But he also asked for a receipt in full!

In talent, they supplemented each other admirably. A word of caution here, for in comparing two individuals, one has a tendency to make the contrast too sharp and clear-cut. Neither Charles nor John entirely lacked the abilities and qualities of the other. Charles, for example, was not entirely lacking in organizing ability, legislative talent, or leadership quality but John was preëminently an organizer, a legislator, a governor, and a leader.

True, John did not advocate a new theology or new doctrines; in that he only followed St. Paul, Luther, the Moravians, and the creed of the Church of England. His distinctive methods were not original. In forming Societies, for instance, he followed a plan which for some time had already been in use in the Church of England and elsewhere; the arrangement of classes and bands he took from the Moravians; into field preaching he was pushed by Whitefield; so too with preaching in houses. He stumbled on to the financial system through

an inspiration that came to a layman. In a sense he seemed an opportunist, an imitator, rather than an inventor of methods, but he recognized, consciously or subconsciously, the value and opportunity in any plan, adapted it to his objectives, and used it for his program. In doing so, he was a statesman indeed.

John was not wholly lacking in feeling, but Charles preëminently a man of feeling. John put it tersely but truly when he called himself "(in some sense) the head" and Charles "the heart" of their joint work. Both were needed and both were essential; indeed they were "The Romulus and Remus of Methodism." The medallion on the walls of Westminster Abbey properly shows their profiles together.

Although John had some poetic sense and genius, his best poems were translations or adaptations, while Charles was a creative poet *par excellence*. Certain qualities of personality go with a poetic nature, with a man of heart and of emotion rather than of reasoning. Charles was a lover of mankind and adapted himself to John's leadership in matters of the head. John had authority and cultivated command; he did it well and enjoyed it. Charles was content to be second in command. When his warm nature first attracted men—especially Whitefield and Gambold—to the Holy Club, he referred them to his elder and more experienced brother whenever they had doubts. Charles abased himself with self-effacing humility and—unlike John—had almost an inferiority complex. He temperamentally shrank from responsibility, avoided preëminence, and disliked personal power. But he admired it in his brother, and said, 'I submit . . . I am perfectly satisfied with my own insignificance.'

Especially before May, 1738, he deferred to John. As Gambold said of him of Holy Club days, "I have never had any person have a more real deference for another than he has for his brother . . . He followed his brother entirely." That this was more or less true throughout his life is indicated by his daughter's statement after his death: "He always said his brother was formed to lead and he to follow. No one rejoiced more in another's superiority or was more willing to confess it."

Though Charles originated and organized the Holy Club, he just naturally surrendered leadership to John on the latter's return to Oxford. Never once in his career did he show any jealousy.

In early Oxford days, while revisiting Westminster, he wrote John, "If anything can prevent my ever disagreeing with you, 'twill be somebody's indignation that we agree so well." This may mark the growing ascendancy of John over Charles in rivalry with that of the still older brother, Samuel, with whom Charles had been for about ten

years. Brother Samuel had vigorously opposed the Georgia move but had to recognize John's superior influence, for he wrote Charles, "His will was strong enough to bend you to go though not me to consent. I freely own 'twas the will of Jack but am not yet convinced 'twas the will of God." Possibly Samuel was right.

In Georgia Charles seemed to lean much on John; in his great trouble and illness at Frederica he sent to Savannah for his brother. But after the religious experience of his "Day of Pentecost", May 21, 1738, he became no longer John's subordinate, but his coördinate and complement in the evangelistic work. They were the co-founders of Methodism.

Charles' poetic nature made him at times impetuous and impulsive, seemingly hasty, sometimes partisan. This contrasted sharply with John's calmness, self-possession, and reasoning judiciousness. Each needed the compensation of the other. An incident in one Conference session illustrates both Charles' excitability and John's calmness. Disturbed by a speaker's long drawn-out harangue, Charles exclaimed, "Stop that man from speaking and let us attend to business," adding a little later even more impatiently, "Unless he stops, I'll leave the Conference." Calmly John exclaimed, "Reach that man his hat."

Both averred they disliked controversy, but John's logical ability made him seem to enjoy combating issues. Charles was quite the opposite. Realizing his proneness to losing his temper, he fled into the woods at Frederica to avoid meeting the disagreeable Chaplain, hid from his irate brother-in-law, abruptly left the room during a discussion on "instantaneousness", as abruptly left the Conference session during a tense debate, and closed many hot arguments by a concluding observation and withdrawal. Some have seen a lack of courage in this habit; but Charles knew his limitations, his short temper, and impulsiveness. On one occasion he recorded, "My natural temper was kept down"; frequently he felt it worthy of record that he held his temper. He exhorted George Whitefield to "put up his sword" and offered Cennick mutual silence on controverted points. He wanted peace. Charles showed great tact on some occasions, John on nearly all. Charles was always self-depreciative; John, as one biographer says, was never in danger from a feeling of humility or from an inferiority complex.

Charles was "made for friendship," was warm and affectionate; he was a lover and beloved of men. Beside him, John seemed impersonal, hard, and aloof. To common folks Charles seemed more human and had a richer nature.

Charles was vivacious, merry, and enthusiastic. In his Oxford days

we have a picture of him rushing into John's room, short-sightedly running into his brother's table and overturning it, discomposing John's orderly books and papers, asking questions but not waiting for replies, repeating some poetry that struck him and then rushing out. He was indeed "made for pleasure." Wit and humor attended his recordings throughout life. John may have had as great capacity, but from childhood cold reason almost entirely suppressed not only levity but also wit. He even seriously writes in his *Journal* how he was once providentially protected from missiles by a "large woman" who sat in his little lap in a carriage!

Charles' poetic affectionate nature made him mercurial, subject to ups and downs, fits of joy and elation, and spells of depression and despondency. John, calm and cold, was of more even temperament, quite independent of external conditions.

Charles could forgive but not forget; nor could he fully trust again anyone who committed a serious offense or lapsed in moral conduct. John, on the other hand, marvelously could and did seemingly forget as well as forgive most opposition. This, therefore, made him appear more charitable.

Charles was more cautious and "saw through" folks. Even John acknowledged, "Many times you see farther into men than I do." Charles was not exactly suspicious but would keep people longer under observation or "on probation." John took folks at their own evaluation and was often "taken in." It is strange that he did not always apply his discriminating reasoning to the judgment of witnesses or the appraisal of testimony. At times Charles was impatient with John's "leniency."

John's logical clearness in argument made him sometimes seem verbose or prolix; Charles' terseness shows in his use of characterizing epithets and pithy statements. Of this John said, "In short pointed sentences you beat me;" and on another occasion, "I am very sensible that writing letters is my brother's talent rather than mine."

Early Methodism had no Publicity Department and needed none. Miraculously changed lives were living advertisements; these and persecution spread the news fast. Charles, always shrinking from publicity, wrote, "I cannot like advertising. It looks like sounding a trumpet." John, however, had a yen for publishing and understood the psychology of publicity. He wrote, for example, to the publisher of one of his publications: "Say something about it (no matter what) in a half a dozen more of your papers . . . But their mentioning it makes many inquiries concerning it, and so disperses it more and more."

Wars seemed to be an integral part of human experience then even more than now. While John offered to raise and support a company of volunteer soldiers when England was threatened with an invasion, Charles voiced the real feeling of both:

“
Where men, like fiends, each other tear,
In all the hellish rage of war.”

“O might the universal Friend
This havoc of his creatures see!
Bid our unnatural discord end,
Declare us reconciled in Thee;
Write kindness on our inward parts,
And chase the murderer from our hearts.”

Both used the inspiration of wide reading and reproduced the thoughts of other men when such would serve their high purpose. When Charles, usually quite original, put grain in his hopper, it came out flour. John, however, given to reproducing whatever he deemed good for his people, was not so original and, with the best of intention, sometimes reproduced others' writings verbatim without formal permission. Indeed, for his neglect of copyright law in his *Moral and Sacred Poems*, he had to pay £50 to a publisher as a fine for “piracy.”

Nor was John happy in all his letters and publications about the War of Independence in America. In 1771 he had said, “I do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America. I doubt whether any man can defend them on the basis of law, equity or prudence.” In 1775, only a few hours before the battle of Bunker Hill, he wrote Premier Lord North, averring his knowledge of America and advising strongly against the effectiveness of attempted coercion by force of arms. Prophetically he said:

“These men will not be frightened. And it seems they will not be conquered so easily as was at first imagined. They will probably dispute every inch of ground, and, if they die, die sword in hand.

“. . . They are strong men as you; they are as valiant as you; if not abundantly more valiant. For they are one and all enthusiasts; enthusiasts for liberty. They are calm, deliberate enthusiasts. . . .

These men think, one and all, be it right or wrong, that they are contending *pro aris et focis*, for their wives, children and liberty. What (an) advantage have they herein over men that fight only for pay . . .” But in four months, after having examined more closely the plans of the Colonists for independence, he changed his mind

completely and reproduced in an abridged form Samuel Johnson's *Taxation no Tyranny*, under Wesley's title, *A Calm Address to the American Colonies*, in which he defended the right to tax without representation. His Toryism had prevailed. His publication ran into tens of thousands of copies and produced a great sensation throughout England. John was assailed not only by sympathizers with the colonists but by accusers of plagiarism in reproducing the publication as his own. Johnson, however, took it as a compliment. Charles did not go with John on this. The younger brother's attitude to the American struggle appears in a letter he wrote March, 1775, to a preacher in America:

"My dear Brother,—

"As to public affairs, I wish you to be like-minded with me. I am of neither side and yet of both; on the side of New England and of Old. Private Christians are excused, exempted, privileged, to take no part in civil troubles. We love all and pray for all with a sincere and impartial love. Faults there may be on both sides; but such as neither you nor I can remedy; therefore, let us, and all our children, give ourselves unto prayer, and so stand still and see the salvation of God."

John seemed to many to be an autocrat; unquestionably that did appear to be a strong strain, for he was naturally a little despot. In 1790 he wrote John Mason: "As long as I live, the people shall have no share in choosing either stewards or leaders among the Methodists. We have not and never had any such custom. We are no republicans, and never intend to be." It is not that he consciously sought power as power, but his talent and superiority made it inevitable. Susanna had trained him to "break wills"; he was born to lead (as Charles had said) and felt he was divinely called to do so. His organization was his own; he did not train up understudies. He appointed when and where and how societies should meet; chose and removed both members and leaders; and sent for ministers to advise but not to help govern. He kept the sole power of appointing preachers and directing their activities; he also made his Sermons and Notes the standard for thinking and preaching. True for nearly two decades he always associated his brother with him; but later, after some differences with Charles, he seemed, according to his biographer Whitehead, to make up his mind not to suffer an equal, let alone a superior, determining to be *Aut Caesar aut nullus*. In 1789 Asbury, flatly refusing one of John's assignments, wrote: "Mr. Wesley and I are like Caesar and Pompey; he will bear no equal and I will bear no superior." Charles chafed under his trend to autocracy; he filed one

of John's letters with this notation: "Brother, October 31, 1753, trying to bring me under his yoke."

Earlier in a letter to Lady Huntingdon, which unfortunately went astray and fell into John's hands, Charles had, with his keen understanding of men, called attention to the fact that the preachers' financial dependence made for John's authority over them. John, in his guilelessness, had not realized that.

When John was seriously ill in November, 1752, Charles told the Society in London that, if his brother died, he would not succeed him, that he had neither a body nor a mind, neither talent nor grace for it. Over twenty years later, when Fletcher urged him to preside if John died, he was of the same mind. John had to recognize Charles' appraisal of himself as correct and therefore wrote the saintly, intellectual, but retiring Fletcher about succeeding him, but Fletcher thought himself not fitted. John, however, outlived both Charles and Fletcher.

The ghost "Old Jeffrey" visited the Epworth rectory in December, 1715, and January, 1716. All in the house believed in ghosts but apparently were not frightened. John and Charles were away at school in London. Concerning the ghost, the latter makes only a couple of passing facetious remarks in his letters. But John was greatly impressed, carried on extensive correspondence with all involved, and referred to the visitation all through his life. His consuming concern with the preternatural was either a cause or an effect of this. He believed in ghosts and took stock in dreams and visions. In this, however, Charles was the more practical. Dr. Johnson regarded Charles "more solid" because he, unlike John, was not carried away by ghost stories. The older brother, Samuel, writing chidingly to John, says Charles had told him that he believed no more in dreams than did the writer himself.

John's *Journals*, as contrasted especially with Charles', show great interest in the unusual or preternatural. He records as facts the tales told him. It was an era of general superstition and fortune-telling among the masses. Against the intellectual scepticism of that period, John reacted and wanted to be convinced and to convince others of the reality of the supernatural here and now. Like his contemporaries he believed in an active personal devil on whom it was convenient to blame evil; he believed also in diabolical activity and in the action on men of good and evil spirits which were "permitted" by God. Indeed he was quite dogmatic about this belief and declined, even though pressed, to leave out from his *Journal* the accounts of demoniacs and apparitions. His records of healing and answers to

prayer seem naive, even to many generally sympathetic with his views. But providential interferences, such as the rising and falling of winds or the coming and going of sheltering clouds, accord with his childish faith in the service to him of the supernatural. Even more unworthy to us, but natural to him, were the recordings, as believed, of visitations, and judgments of physical calamity, even of death, on those opposing.

John believed also in witchcraft; so did that age. Scotland burned a witch as late as 1722; England did not repeal its statute against witchcraft until John was thirty-three; Blackstone, a contemporary of John, said in his Commentaries that witchcraft and sorcery were recognized by Scripture and by the laws of all nations. John was quite dogmatic about this belief also. Though he acknowledged men of learning were giving up the belief, he wrote when sixty-four years of age: ". . . Such insolence . . . in direct opposition not only to the Bible but to the suffrage of the wisest and best of men in all ages and nations. They well know (whether Christians know it or not) that the giving up witchcraft is, in effect, giving up the Bible . . ." Quite late in life he wrote, "While I live I will bear the most public testimony I can to the reality of witchcraft." Charles probably believed, with many of that age, in the nearness of the spiritual world, but his records are strangely silent on witchcraft. Apparently he did not share John's interest and belief.

Moreover, Charles was clearly out of sympathy with John's excessive credulity. He was irked by it, even going to and in Georgia. It showed also in John's relations with Sophy. Oglethorpe sent a special warning to John against hypocrites. The shrewd but hypocritical Appee told Charles that John was easily imposed on. Of the Georgia experience, Charles impatiently exclaimed that John "was born for the benefit of knaves." John regarded others to be as sincere as himself and was too ready to credit their testimony. He was over-charitable, taking everybody at his own valuation of himself. Charles, on the other hand, was over-cautious. "For my own part," he wrote, "I will ever beware of men as He who best knows them advises. I will not think all men rogues till I find them otherwise . . . but I will insist upon a far different probation from what my brother requires before I take anyone into my confidence." Charles would have kept on probation, for example, those Turks whom John baptized and afterward found out to be impostors.

Although John admitted Charles had keener insight into men, he tried to defend himself and save his superiority by over-stating their difference, even deceiving himself: "I believed in everybody; Charles

believed in no one and Charles was more often deceived than I." But he was more judicious when later he wrote Charles, "When you fear the worst, your fears should be regarded, and when I hope the best, you may almost believe me . . . Your defect of mistrust needs my excess to guard it . . . we seem designed for each other. If we could and would be more together it might be better for both." It was not the whole or exact truth, as in any generalization; but the truth was embodied in Charles brief statement: "My brother is all hope, I am all fear."

But John was altogether too credulous. It was a matter of constant anxiety to Charles as is shown in the letter he wrote to Lady Huntingdon in which he spoke of, "that rashness and credulity of his, which has kept me in continual awe and bondage for many years." John, however, realized and occasionally admitted this weakness. He said once to Henry Moore, "I have been too tender of these men. You should have opposed my receiving them again. You know *I halt on that foot*." John wanted to organize Societies at once. Said Charles, "I am in no haste for a Society; let us see how the people live."

Charles also became impatient with John's guileless frankness and lack of reserve, and declared John could never keep a secret. "He never could since he was born. It is a gift which God did not give him."

To us, even more reprehensible was the resort to lottery, by drawing lots directly and even by using therefor the Bible. Both brothers engaged in these two practices, John more than Charles but Charles going along with him. They took these activities from the devout Moravians, who often carried the practice to absurdity. First, all human prudence was supposed to have been exhausted; then the lot-drawing proceeded, accompanied by prayer. John openly defends drawing lots and "Bibliomancy" or *Sortes Biblicae* in his "Principles of a Methodist Further Explained."

Bibliomancy consisted in opening the Bible at random and taking the first text that came to the eye for guidance, sometimes with strange applicability but often with absurd unrelatedness. It was a favorite practice of the Wesleys, which they called "consulting the oracle", the oracle being the Holy Bible. Charles found the lesson of the day peculiarly helpful, especially in Georgia; but he also frequently dipped into the Bible for himself. At times apparently he had misgivings, as he once "asked God to give me a sign" and then added, "if it was not tempting Him." In all this the Wesleys were creatures of their times; it was then generally believed that every word

of the Bible, as is, was dictated by God and that all parts were of equal value.

One peculiar outgrowth of Bibliomancy was the misuse of Scripture cards, also called "Draw Cards". These came in packs of fifty-two; each had a text of Scripture on one side and usually a verse of one of Charles' hymns on the other. These too came from the Moravians, though various Independent churches used them also. John even permitted advertisements for them in his magazine. In an atmosphere induced by Bibliomancy they came to be semi-superstitiously used. Significance was attached to the first card turned up. They were also used in telling fortunes.

But not all people accepted them. Adam Clarke, a companion of John in his old age, especially opposed them. "Wherever you go," said he, "discountenance that disgraceful custom (properly enough termed) Bibliomancy, i.e., divination by the Bible . . . drawing indications thence concerning the present and future state of the soul. This is a scandal to Christianity. So also are those religious trifles, impiously and ominously called *Scripture Cards*. Thank God, these have never been very common among us and are certainly not of Methodist growth. In an evil hour they were first introduced and have since been criminally tolerated. I have found them the constant companions of religious *gossips*; and have seen them *drawn* for the purpose of showing the success of journeys, enterprises, etc., etc. . . . Giving the authors of them all the credit we can for the goodness of their intentions, we cannot help saying . . . that they are the drivelling of religious nonage or of piety in superannuation."

There were many strange manifestations under some preaching in that day—extraordinary excitement, falling down, trembling, jerking, convulsions, swoons, trances, speechlessness, incoherency, sobbings, groanings, and writhings in agony. However, these were not unique with Methodists in England. They appeared with New England Congregationalism under Jonathan Edwards, in Wales, in the Kentucky revival in 1800, among Presbyterians in Western United States and in Ireland a century after the Wesleys, even also in Scotland and Germany, and in the medieval Roman Church in Scotland.

These manifestations appeared usually at the beginning of a revival and then gradually declined. Under John Wesley they began after the churches were closed to him, continued only a few months, and ceased gradually when he began to discourage them or when he moved to the Foundery. They occurred most frequently in Bristol and Newcastle, where the inhabitants were more elemental, brutal, and ignorant. They happened more under John's logical but pene-

trating sermons, and less violently under Charles' emotional appeals and George Whitefield's dramatic discourses. Various causes are alleged. The most common was the effect on the body of a mind disturbed by a strong emotion, such as a vivid conviction of heinous sin under the extreme immoral conditions of the day on a background belief in an awful judgment and its eternal possibilities. Added to this, there was the influence of physical proximity in a crowded room, with suggestion and possible subconscious imitation. The expectation of John Wesley, thinking of Pentecost and at the same time intrigued by the reports from Jonathan Edwards, may indirectly have contributed. While most manifestations were genuine, there was also conscious imitation and deliberate drive for attention.

John was puzzled and his explanations varied. Since he was overcredulous, he first attributed them to the Holy Spirit. Then he considered them not necessarily as marks of conversion. Later he attributed them to Satan, discrediting the work of God. Finally after mature deliberation, he thought they might be of God, of nature, or of the devil!

Charles, as to be expected, had little patience for such, saying the cryings out neither offended nor edified him and were "no sign of grace in my humble opinion." However, let him in his own words record his attitudes:

"Some stumbling-blocks, with the help of God, I have removed, particularly the fits. Many no doubt were, at our first preaching, struck down, both soul and body, into the depth of distress. These *outward affections* were easy to be imitated. Many counterfeits I have already detected. Today, one who came from the ale-house drunk, was pleased to fall into a fit for my entertainment, and beat himself heartily. I thought it a pity to hinder him; so, instead of singing over him, as had often been done, we left him to recover at his leisure. Another girl, as she began her cry, I ordered to be carried out. Her convulsion was so violent as to take away the use of her limbs, till they laid and left her without the door. Then immediately she found her legs, and walked off. Some very unstill sisters, who always took care to stand near me, and try which should cry loudest, since I had them removed out of my sight, have been as quiet as lambs. The first night I preached here, half my words were lost through their outcries. Last night, before I began, I gave public notice that whosoever cried, so as to drown my voice, should, without any man's hurt, or judging them, be gently carried to the farthest corner of the room. But my porters had no employment the whole night; yet the Lord was with us, mightily convincing of sin

and righteousness. . . . I observed at Newcastle that many more of the gentry come now that the stumbling block of fits is taken out of their way; and I am more and more convinced it was a device of Satan, to stop the course of the Gospel. Since I preached it, (if I can discern anything) it never had greater success than at this time. Yet we have no fits among us; and I have done nothing to prevent them, only declared that I do not think the better of any one for crying out, and interrupting my work."

In spite of some differences, John and Charles were strangely one in evangelism.

Co-Workers and the Church

The Methodist deviation from the Established Church of England was not in doctrine but in the unpopularity of certain Methodist emphases and interpretations. The gradual separation came rather because of departures from traditional methods and practices. These included (1) extempore prayer, (2) field preaching, (3) organizing societies, (4) use of laymen, (5) meetings in Church hours, (6) administering Sacrament in Chapels or elsewhere than in Churches, (7) administering of Sacrament by episcopally unordained men, and (8) irregular ordination. These variations from Church usage or rubrics were not premeditated but were drifted into by chance or because of apparent necessity and fruitfulness. Frequent and loud criticism came from many of the clergy including Bishops, but at no time was there formal or official ecclesiastical censure.

A live and lively Christian experience broke forth naturally into extempore prayer, in addition to using the ritual prayers. The Wesleys were as learned in the ancient languages, wrote and spoke at least as good English as, and probably had more personal religion than, the composers of the Church Book of Prayer. Their use of extempore prayer was not so much against the law as against custom. So was it with field preaching, which had been practiced even in Kingswood by a regular minister of the Church many months before George Whitefield's field debut.

The original intent of the Wesleys was to promote a revival of real religion in the Church of England. They intended the "Societies" which they organized to be groups within the *Church* of England.

For a while John thought vaguely that they might be a link between that Church and the Dissenters. Later he came to stand midway between the masses from heathenism and those coming from Dissenter ranks, on the one hand, and the original Methodists, on the other.

Charles was always consistently for the Church and for Methodists as Societies in the Church. Both brothers regarded their converts as members of the Church; to them Methodism was not to be a sect outside the Church. Yet at no time were these societies authorized or officially recognized by Church authorities, nor did they have any formal relation to the Church. Indeed the Wesleys never sought such

recognition. They—and especially John—almost ignored Bishops and “authority.” “We ought to obey God rather than men,” said they, “Church or no Church, we must save souls.”

John should have seen the drift or tendency away from the Church as Charles did; the members “got religion” in Methodist meetings, not in the Church. Indeed, responding to a growing desire, both sometimes preached without forming Societies, Charles more often than John. At times John seemed as much pro-Church as Charles; indeed he once said he was willing that the word “Methodist” should never be mentioned but should be buried in oblivion. Both tried, however, to promote good will toward the clergy and to get their cooperation, with Charles having more success than John.

Lay helpers came as a response to a need and seemed to be providentially provided. Evangelization spread so fast that it could not be adequately handled by Whitefield and the Wesleys. Their visits over a large territory were necessarily few and far between. How should converts be cared for between such visits? Assistance was imperative. At first the assistants were called “helpers” and were like lay readers. They were fitted to promote practical, vital religion by sympathy, fortitude, courage and, most of all, by a genuine, personal experience of salvation. Both Wesleys at first were against their “preaching.” John was persuaded by influences from his mother and from Lady Huntingdon—also, as his mother suggested, by hearing one preach. Churchly Charles came to see their necessity and that their service was of God.

Charles would have joined in John’s tribute of 1784 to these lay preachers: “He chose the weak things to confound the strong, and the foolish things, to confound the wise. He chose a few young, poor ignorant men, without experience, learning or art; but simple of heart, devoted to God, full of faith and zeal, seeking no honor, no profit, no pleasure, no ease, but merely to save souls; fearing neither want, pain, persecution; nor whatever man could do to them; yea, not counting their lives dear unto themselves, so that they might finish their course with joy.” In fact Charles himself had written in April, 1746: “I conferred with several who had tasted the love of Christ, mostly under the preaching or prayers of our lay-helpers. How can anyone dare deny that they are sent of God? O that all who have the outward call were as inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to preach! O that they would make full proof of their ministry.”

Charles also had expressed in verse his resentment against unworthy priests of the Church who made lay preachers necessary,—

*"Shall we the Spirit's course restrain,
Or quench the heavenly fire?
Let God his messengers ordain
And whom he will inspire,
Blow as he list, the Spirit's choice
Of instruments we bless;
We will, if Christ be preach'd, rejoice,
And wish the word success.*

*Master, for thine we cannot own
The workmen who themselves create,
Their call receive from man alone,
As licensed servants of the State
Who to themselves the honour take,
Nor tarry till the Spirit move,
But serve for filthy lucre's sake
The souls they neither feed nor love.*

*The evangelic minister
Should above others have
A zeal for God, an active care
Immortal souls to serve;
But if his duty he neglects,
His long-offended Lord
The slothful servant will reject
And quite revoke the word.*

*The word, the cure, the labouring zeal,
He doth to others give,
And laymen now of Jesus tell,
And urge us to believe;
Unlearned they rise and scale the sky,
While scribes, who all things know,
Live ignorant of Christ, and die,
And find their place below."*

Charles defended lay preachers in a characteristic manner in an interview with the Archbishop in Bristol. Said his Lordship, "I could never account for your employing laymen."

"My Lord," said Charles, "the fault is yours and your brethren's."

"How so?" asked the primate.

"Because you hold your peace and the stones cry out."

"But I am told," his Grace continued, "that they are unlearned men."

"Some are," said the sprightly poet, "and so the dumb ass rebukes the prophet." His Lordship said no more.

The Wesleys were not certain of the legality of their use of lay-preachers; but, if illegal, John and Charles put conscience above the law of the Church. In one of John's letters we read: "We are not clear that this (lay preaching) is contrary to any such (which we profess to obey) law. But if it is, this is one of the exempt cases; one wherein we cannot obey with a safe conscience."

Charles wanted them kept within bounds, to be content with preaching only. He was greatly disturbed when, in 1760, three of them started to administer the Sacraments. He therefore made an extensive protest, while John was at best lukewarm. Indeed Charles refused to recognize the ordination of one by a Greek Bishop, though John seemed to accept it.

The crudeness and lack of education in some of these helpers and their easy descent into fanaticism led Charles to urge more care in their selection. John, too, as late as 1789, regarded them as "*lay* helpers", not legally fitted to administer Sacraments. He was inclined to be more lenient than Charles, however, the latter thinking about the harm they might do and the former about the good they might do. Both were right. Charles proposed they should not leave their secular occupations but preach on Sundays as "*local preachers*". In thus having regard to financial support, he was more practical than John.

Gradually and increasingly, the lay preachers wanted ordination. They became an indispensable feature of Methodism, so much so that Charles said John would never consent to suppress them; indeed John said he would "*separate*" rather than try to stop them.

Both Wesleys urged their converts to attend the services in the Churches and never to schedule any Methodist meeting at the same hour as an Established Church service. In fact, the Rules of the Societies required attending the Church and its Sacraments—else they could not remain with the Methodists. Meeting places were designated as such or as Chapels, never as Churches. True, John in his old age had to bend to a popular trend and allow holding meeting in Church hours if the church was too small or too distant or if the minister was notoriously wicked or preached pernicious doctrines. At eighty-four, he told one Society that, if they had meetings in Church hours, they would see his face no more. But when Thomas Coke, on whom he had grown quite dependent, ventured to ignore the rule a few months later in Ireland, he reluctantly assented to the

change but required Methodist chapels to be closed on Communion days.

To understand the difference between John and Charles, we should recall early influences. Charles was his father's son, and Samuel Sr. was nothing if not a regular Churchman. John, on the other hand, was his mother's son, and Susanna was independent, sometimes even irregular. During his most formative years, from eight to eighteen years of age, Charles was in the shadow of Westminster Abbey seven days a week and regularly attended services there. During all this impressionable period he was under the guidance and influence of his elder brother, Samuel Jr., who was a super-loyal Churchman. Adam Clarke, writing only four years after John's death, probably was guilty of under-statement regarding John and over-statement regarding Charles when he said that John mildly recommended the people to go to Church and Sacrament while Charles threatened them with damnation if they did not!

There was a strong prejudice against administering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper anywhere outside a regularly consecrated Church. Early in his career, after the colliers and he had been repelled from the Sacramental table in a Bristol Church, Charles administered Communion in the school at Kingswood and declared he would have been justified if he had administered it in the woods. This was the first administration by the Wesleys outside a consecrated house—and by Charles! Meanwhile a London newspaper taunted Charles' irregularity in thus administering without a Bishop's license. John was rejoiced to get, along with the Bishop's consent, a lease on West Street Chapel, a duly consecrated building, so that he could administer the Holy Sacrament regularly.

Gradually, in spite of both Wesleys, conditions moved toward a separation from the Church of England. The trend should have been apparent to all. In fact, the Conference considered it increasingly each year. Church pulpits were closed to Methodist leaders. "Not hold meetings in Church hours!" "Go to Church!" The regular clergy often were not hospitable to the new leaders, shamefully ignored them, railed against Methodist doctrines, ridiculed the lay preachers, and called the members of the Societies to their faces,— "Papists," "heretics," "traitors," and "conspirators." "Go to Sacrament!"—where they were refused and driven away or where at other times they objected to receiving sacred ministrations from obviously far from sacred hands. John at one time exhorted them, when abused, to go out quietly but to attend next opportunity. Later in despair he exclaimed: "I cannot carry this point while I live," and "they will

drive Methodists from the Church in spite of all I can do." And both were inclined to say, after hearing the sermon of a "wretched minister" in a Church: "I could not in conscience advise them to hear him any more."

As time went on, a large proportion of the members of the Societies were from those who had no relation to any Church, and from the Dissenters. Neither of these groups had any loyalty to the Church of England or any interest in her services. No doubt practically all found that the general run of the lay workers were better preachers and more effective men of God than the rank and file of the regular clergy. Also they preferred to receive Communion from their own, with whom they had found and were finding religion. Furthermore, some of the most pious of the Methodist leaders were for separation.

No wonder John vacillated; on one side were his strong love for and his personal loyalty to the Church in which he had been reared and educated, as well as the insistent influence of his brother and colleague, Charles. On the other, were the trend described above and the growing desire of many of the preachers. At this distance, with a *fait accompli*, we are interested only historically; but the issue then was of the utmost pertinency and almost caused, aided by some abetting irritants, a serious rift between the two brothers.

John was backing into separation, with his face toward the Church; Charles was fighting a rear-guard action. John struggled against a strong current that he felt but did not want to admit. He accused Charles of being influenced by those surrounding him; John, however, was even more influenced. At the first Conference in 1744, schism was discussed; and, under John's leadership, they were exhorted to obey God rather than men (Bishops). But they decided emphatically, with Charles probably leading, to remain in the Church. The result would be either to be thrust out or to leaven the old Church. As before noted, every Conference thereafter, even until after John's death, gave several hours or days to a similar discussion.

In the fall of 1754 Charles, suspicious of John's tendency, urged sending letters to the latter, who, said he, had come so far as to regard separation as lawful but *not yet* expedient. At the 1755 Conference, Charles was additionally alarmed by John's liberality. After the Conference, John said they would not go out but "if thrust out, *well*" and summed up pro-separation reasonings with a clear bias toward such, adding, "I will freely admit I cannot answer these arguments to my own satisfaction." A few years later he alarmed Charles even more in two of those intimate brotherly letters: "(I tell you a secret) I do not think the work will ever be destroyed, Church or no Church";

and, seven years later: "I am at my wit's end with regard to two things, the Church and . . . Unless you and I stand in the gap in good earnest the Methodists will drop them both."

When in 1784 he first ordained, he, in Charles' judgment, performed an act of separation. Earlier in the same year by the Deed of Declaration he had provided for the perpetuation of the Methodist connexion. Yet he had made many strong pro-Church utterances, such as these: In 1760 "Whoever separates from the Church will separate from the Methodists"; in 1773 he described the spreading desire to leave the Church as "madness"; and in 1777 he expressed fear that, when the Methodists would leave the Church, God would leave them. Again at the 1778 Conference he advised all his friends to keep to the "old ship", as Charles called the Church. He guided the 1780 Conference to declare: "We shall agree that none, who leave the Church, shall remain with us." Three years later he said "If Methodists leave the Church, I must leave them"; in 1785, after executing the Deed and "ordaining": "I had no more thought of separating . . . than I had forty years ago"; and in his old age, in 1788: "I dare not leave the Church . . . I am a Church of England man . . . in the Church I will live and die, unless I am thrust out."

The last two words occur frequently in his later utterances. At the 1788 Conference he could not agree with the impulsive Coke, who advocated separation. John said that Coke would tear all from top to bottom, while he, Wesley, would only "unstitch." In 1789 he issued a circular denying any intention of separating and preached a sermon against it. In the last year of his life, after expressing his perplexity and apprehension for the future, he declared: "I live and die a member of the Church of England and none who regard my judgment or advice will ever separate from it . . . And I believe, one reason why God is pleased to continue my life so long, is,—to confirm them [the Methodists] in their present purpose, not to separate from the Church."

He may seem to us, as he did to his brother Charles, to have been "facing both ways," but he only honestly reflected his vacillation between the two influences. John defended himself against the charge of inconsistency by saying he acted on two principles: "The one, that I dare not *separate* from the Church, that I believe it would be a sin so to do; the other that I believe it would be a sin, not to *vary* from it" in some methods. On the other hand, Charles was consistent, almost obstinately so; with his natural impetuosity he added to his profound love for the Church; in addition, he propagandized by letters and sermons against separation and seemingly also at times

against his brother. Apparently in several Conferences he exerted a powerful influence among the preachers, but in time the majority became increasingly alienated by his zeal for the Church. Charles also had a strong restraining influence over John.

Charles' saying regarding the church, "My brother is all hope; I am all fear," embodied a truth; but, like any aphorism, did not express the modifications of the truth. Charles worried much about what would happen after their death; John, however, was hopeful but without much support for his hope, being content to leave the future relation with the Church to Providence. "I do not, will not, concern myself with what will be done when I am dead. I shall take no thought about that," he declared. Apparently later his attitude had some effect on Charles, who wrote, "God will look to the matter of successors. He buries his workers and still carries on His work. Let Him send by whom He will send."

Charles' constant iteration of his fears may have hurried John to the Deed of Declaration which provided for Methodism's future after their death. Charles' favorite text, used many times for a period, was "I will bring the third part through the fire," and he applied it to prophesy that about one-third of the Methodists would be loyal to the Church of England after their death.

This probably led John to think along the same line. In 1788 he wrote: "The rest (who will, I trust, be the largest third) will continue together on the itinerant plan." Near his own death, but some time after Charles' death, he wrote, "I am inclined to think not one-half, probably not a third of them" will separate. "These will be so bold and injudicious as to form a separate party, which consequently, will dwindle into a dry, dull separate party." After the death of both Wesleys, a large part of the Methodists, though they did not seem to agree with Charles' theories, *did* follow his precept of remaining both in the Societies and in the Church.

But discussion about the Church led to a sharp difference between John and Charles. The latter was not only impetuous but over-fearful and over-suspicious; John was perplexed and took their differences too seriously. John's letters at times, especially those written when he was ill, were petulant. He was lonesome and may have been occasionally over-sensitive about Charles, as Charles' letters to his wife would indicate. "He is quite happy in the recovery of what he never lost," wrote he, "my hearty good will toward him and his family . . . My brother preached, and won all our hearts. I never liked him better and was never more united to him."

Charles, too, was inconsistent. While his protestations for the

Church were stronger, he was the first not only to administer the Sacrament to Methodists outside an authorized Church building but also to preach regularly in London Methodist Chapels with a weekly Sacrament during Church hours, even while John and many of the other preachers were scrupulously avoiding the use of such hours.

Charles once stated, "All the difference between my brother and me was that my brother's first object was the Methodists and then the Church; mine was first the Church and then Methodists"; and to his wife he wrote, averring that his chief concern was the prosperity of the Church of England; his next was that of the Methodists and his third that of the preachers. He over-simplified though, and was too hard on himself. He chose to be poor with the Methodists, rejecting ease and wealth in offered positions in the Church. He mercilessly attacked the recalcitrant clergy of the Church. No one worried more about the future, especially the financial future, of the lay preachers, even while he wished them to be lay only. And he found his greatest joy and inspiration ever among the Methodists.

The crux of the differences came in the "ordination" of September 2, 1784. It might be interesting to review the influences which led up to the "ordination." Soon after the second Conference of 1745, which discussed at length the Church government, both John and Charles read "An Inquiry of the Primitive Church," which attempted to show that Bishops and Presbyters or Elders are essentially of one order and have the same authority. It was written by Peter King before he was twenty-two years of age, when he was a Dissenter. He later became a Churchman and was made Lord High Chancellor. Both brothers were affected by it. Charles' poems that were composed after reading King's pamphlet have nothing of his previous High Church views. John began flirting with the idea, which grew upon him.

Later in the "Notes on the New Testament," revised jointly with Charles, they were doubtful: "Perhaps Elders and Bishops were the same." Ten years later they were still far from clear that Presbyters or Elders might appoint or ordain, though they might "direct" or "permit", as John was doing.

In 1756 under the influence of *Irenicum* by Stillingfleet, John decided that while Episcopal government was Scriptural and apostolic, it was not *prescribed* by Christ or his apostles. In 1761, John denied the necessity but not the expediency of ordination by Bishops. In a letter to Charles in 1780, however, he said that Stillingfleet's book had convinced him he had as good right to ordain as he had to administer the Lord's Supper.

So he was gradually led to believe what he wanted to believe, namely, that he was a Scriptural "Bishop." Why not? He had been giving his preachers authority to preach, had been appointing them and ruling over them. Charles, however, did not go so fast nor so far; so that when John in 1784 took the step toward which all this led, Charles was far from ready for it.

Meanwhile America presented a peculiar and pressing case. Thousands of miles away across an ocean, which then required about two months of perilous sailing to cross, America, by the War of Independence, had been "disentangled" from England, in both State and Church, and was now "free to follow Scripture and the early Church." Methodism had many members in many Societies in America, yet had no one authorized to administer the Sacrament. Even the Church of England had very few so authorized and these were none too desirable. The Methodist people were clamoring for the Sacraments. John was anxious for his sheep in that continent; indeed he felt responsibility.

First, he tried to get a Bishop of the Church of England to ordain someone but was refused. Even the request of Seabury, an American missionary of their own Church, was refused, so that Seabury had to seek ordination by Scottish Bishops. He became the first Bishop of Connecticut.

Meanwhile Thomas Coke appeared. He was short like the Wesleys but stouter than they—the only child of wealthy parents. He held both a Master of Arts degree and a Doctor of Laws degree from Oxford. Though ordained, he was disappointed by his appointments in the Church, apparently expecting early preferment. He sought out John Wesley but was somewhat chagrined when John told him to go back to his curacy, to give no offence, but to do all the good he could. Even John recognized then that Coke's "great enemy was applause." He was dismissed from his curacy because of certain actions which were at least provocative. So he threw in his lot with the Methodists at the 1777 Conference.

John welcomed this Oxford graduate, an ordained elder, a young well-born, wealthy aide. No wonder he did, for John was aging; Charles had refused successorship and had ceased to itinerate; Fletcher, to whom John had next turned, faded out because of his native modesty and ill health. So in Coke, John saw a providential helper.

Coke was a man of zeal, ardor, and boundless energy. He was a peculiar combination. He was unquestionably generous, giving liberally of his ample means to the work of the Kingdom. His mis-

sionary zeal and interest were genuine, even sacrificial. That he was a statesman was shown by his work on the deed records throughout the Conference and also by his part in the preparation of the Deed of Declaration and his ability to steer it through the session of the Conference. He was an appreciated scholar, joint author of the first official biography of Wesley, and, by Conference request, the author of a Commentary on the Bible.

But he was also injudicious, impulsive, and intolerant; he preferred unjustified charges against several preachers and even had to apologize to at least three of them. He was ambitious and determined; "he knew exactly what he wanted and got it."

John Wesley appointed him, as he desired, to a roving commission like John's own. He traveled with John, presided alternately over the Irish Conference, and indeed became John's "right hand", taking over much of the management of the Societies. John, who all his life was over-credulous, became more so in his old age, ever-idealizing those whom he wished to be ideal. This trait annoyed Charles at times. "I do not like you less for that," said Charles to one who admitted he was not one of John's "favorites"; and he told John that if he once loved a man, "You will love on through thick and thin."

John wrote Charles that Coke was free from both ambition and covetousness. About the latter he was probably right, but about the former he had been misled and was decidedly wrong. Coke was unquestionably ambitious; he wanted to be a Bishop (this did not make him unique nor necessarily blameworthy); but John did not realize it.

John thought of sending Coke to America and broached the subject to him. The latter seemed modestly disturbed; for, while thinking about America, he was also thinking about himself and about episcopal authority. Coke told John in one letter he was willing to go as his representative to America if he had "sufficient influence and prudence and delicacy of conduct." A little later he wrote that the power of ordaining in America should be received from Mr. Wesley by the imposition of his hands and gave several reasons for it. He stated cannily, "I may want all the influence in America, which you can throw in my scale." In a letter to Wesley, he suggested how the "ordination" might be carried out. Wrote he:

"You can do all this in Mr. C——n's home, in your chamber and afterwards . . . give us letters testimonial of the different *offices* with which you have been pleased to invest us. For the purpose of laying hands on brothers Whatcoat and Vesey, I can bring Mr. Creighton down with me, by which you will have two presbyters with you.

"In respect to brother Rankin's argument, that you will escape a

great deal of odium by omitting this, it is nothing. Either it will be known or not known. If not known, then no odium will arise but if known, you will be obliged to acknowledge, that I acted under your direction, or suffer me to sink under the weight of my enemies, with perhaps your brother at the head of them."

On September 1, he, Coke, and Creighton, who was also an ordained clergyman of the Church of England, "ordained" two lay preachers as deacons, and the next day as elders, for as such they were to act in America. Also on September 2, at eighty-one years of age, John Wesley laid his hands on Coke in his bedroom in a private house, before daybreak, in candlelight, with only one other regularly ordained clergyman present, and denominated him as Superintendent. Later, as Coke had requested, he wrote out testimonials to America in which he said, "I have accordingly appointed Coke and Asbury to be joint Superintendents over our brethren in North America," preceding this by two paragraphs regarding his right to ordain and concluding "by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest."

Was this all that John Wesley intended? Coke interpreted this "Superintendent" as "Bishop."

What about Charles in all this? He was in the same city, "near at hand," but learned of it only two months later from another person! John had said he never would separate from the Church of England without Charles' consent. Charles regarded ordination as separation. Why the secrecy? Charles said he was "at his brother's elbow but ignored," and sadly added,—“therefore our partnership is dissolved.” Was John afraid of Charles and his influence? To what extent had Coke cultivated this? Charles said that Coke had done what he pleased with John; he had the conviction John had gone awry and blamed it on old age and undue influence. Of course he was indignant, but his letters indicate that he was hurt rather than angry; his message was remonstrative but pleading. One characteristic letter reads in part,—

"After our continued friends for above seventy years and fellow-laborers for above fifty can anything but death part us? I can scarcely yet believe it, that, in his eighty-second year, my brother, my old, intimate friend and companion, should have assumed the episcopal character, ordained Elders, consecrated a Bishop and sent him to ordain our lay-preachers in America . . . How was he surprised into so rash an action? He certainly persuaded himself that it was right."

Charles and Coke did not like one another. Coke had succeeded to Charles' place with John, both in his counsel and in his association

with him. Charles, who had unusual ability to see into and through men, once called Coke "a hot hair-brained heir apparent." Coke probably deliberately cultivated aged John's estrangement from Charles; indeed in a letter he had referred to Charles as perhaps the leader of his enemies.

Charles was genuinely alarmed at Coke's rashness and ambition, possibly over-alarmed, for he feared that Coke, returning from America, would ordain in England and start a separate Church. In fact Coke, meeting with the Moravians, did propose union and a new Church of England.

The Conference of 1786 partly reassured Charles, however, when they unanimously determined to continue in the Church of England. Charles wrote his wife about the Conference: "The Dissenting party made a bold push for a separation, strongly urging my brother to ordain a preacher for a desolate place in Yorkshire . . . All agree to let my brother and me remain in the old ship, till we get safe to land."

That Charles was justified in fearing Coke's ambition is shown by Coke's letter on April 24, 1791, to Bishop White, the first Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Pennsylvania, in which he proposed a union of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Episcopal Church in America. In it Coke manifests the apprehension that he had gone further in the separation than John Wesley had designed, and delicately suggested that, in such union, he himself should be ordained a Bishop. Coke also wrote Bishop Seabury of the same Church on May 14, 1791, making the proposal for union even more definite and adroitly but clearly proposing that he be consecrated Bishop.

In 1813 he told the Earl of Liverpool of his desire to be made Bishop of India and his willingness to return fully into the bosom of the Established Church to accomplish this. In a letter to William Wilberforce April 14, 1813, he unblushingly tried to enlist Wilberforce's influence to that same end. In this he showed himself to be a politician-statesman, for Wilberforce was not only a court favorite but also a friend both of the Prime Minister and of Charles Wesley, and especially interested in India. His seeming to put the Bishopric above both Methodism and the Church of England must not to any degree eclipse, however, the recognition of his real missionary zeal nor of his extensive, indefatigable missionary labors; indeed he died en route to India and was buried at sea.

But let us return to John and Charles Wesley. The situation in Scotland being somewhat similar to that in America, in separation from the Church of England, John "ordained" three for Scotland only, with their strict promise to use none of their power in England. This

led Charles to write to a friend: "His charity believeth all things, even the preachers' promises 'not to use their power in England.' Who can keep them to their promises when he is in his grave? . . . My brother has given the staff out of his own hands . . . It is a very large concession of his that I mean well; yet it is true. For I mean to save him against his will." Later John would not recognize these ordinations in England, for he made the ordainees doff their canonicals in that country and addressed them as "Mr." not "Rev." But in August, 1788, a few months after Charles' death, he again reversed himself and ordained for England. Up to 1788, however, all ordinations had been held in private and not in open Conference session.

In spite of John's annoyance at Coke (1) for preaching in Church hours in Ireland, (2) for proposing separation in the Conference of 1786, and (3) for collecting money in the circuits, Coke and the rebellious preachers influenced and even led the old man, now eighty-five. In some things John Wesley showed his age.

Why did John lay hands on Coke? There is a real point in Charles' satire on the occasion:

*"How easily are Bishops made,
By man or woman's whim.
Wesley his hands on Coke hath laid,
But who laid hands on him?"*

If Presbyters and Bishops had equal authority, any two of the three present had the power to lay hands on the other. Coke or Creighton could have laid hands on Wesley. What was conveyed to Coke by this laying on of hands? If Elders and Bishops have the same authority, why the additional ceremony?

Wesley was confused. While implying episcopal authority, he avoided the word "Bishop"; in the credentials he did not use the word "ordain" but "set apart," though he did use the word "ordain" in his *Journal*. When later, contrary to his intention, Coke and Asbury used the title "Bishop", John wrote his famous letter to Asbury:

"How can you, how dare you suffer yourself to be called a Bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought! Man may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel and I am content; but they shall never by my consent call me Bishop. For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake put a full end to this."

Meanwhile the Church in America formed themselves into an independent Church, adopted the Episcopal form of Church government, voted the name "The Methodist Episcopal Church", and elected General Superintendents. They observed that it appeared more

Scriptural to use the term "Bishop." So Coke's title "Bishop" came not from John Wesley's laying on of hands but from the Christmas Conference in America. He was "Bishop", not of the Methodist Societies in England, but of the independent Church in America.

Did John Wesley have any misgivings about his "ordination" of September 2, 1784, which worried Charles so greatly? He was torn between two desires—to see the Gospel advance and to avoid anything contrary to good Churchmanship.

The 1789 edition of his *Journal* omitted the paragraph regarding the ordinations of September 2, 1784. Was it by error or because of a storm of disapproval? Creighton, who assisted in the "ordinations," is alleged to have said that John Wesley, with tears, repented ordaining lay preachers and occasionally expressed his sorrow regarding it. Hampson, another of John Wesley's contemporaries and biographers, is said to have borne similar testimony. Only a few weeks before his death, John exclaimed, "The preachers are now too powerful for me!" In an exchange of letters with Charles, he went a long way for him when he wrote, "Perhaps if you had kept close to me, I might have done better."

In the letter to Bishop White, referred to above, Coke says, "He went farther, I am sure, than he would have gone, if he had foreseen some events which followed. And this I am certain of—that he is now sorry for the separation."

John would not accept Charles' conviction that "Ordination is separation," as his many strong utterances after 1784 against separation would indicate; but, though seemingly sharply divided, they "agreed to disagree" and were still joined in heart.

Both modified their views somewhat, John as indicated above, and Charles, when he said to him, "I leave America and Scotland to your latest thoughts and recognition."

In spite of differences, however, during the last years of their life, they took several journeys together as of old, and their exchange of letters shows deep brotherly love. John writes, "I trust I shall always be your affectionate friend and brother"; and Charles replies, "I thank you for your intention of remaining my friend. Herein my heart is as your heart . . . We have taken each other for better or worse, till death do us—part! —No but unite eternally."

So these two great human instruments of God forwarded the Kingdom of God on earth as co-workers.

Preacher

Charles was a born preacher; of the three he is rated second to George Whitefield but ahead of his brother John.

His poetic nature made him more emotional than John, who had called himself "the head" of the movement with Charles as "the heart". Emotional glow topped reasoning. One has called his sermons "thunder and lightning." His widow, publishing some of his sermons, said they had "sensibility and fire." John once wrote, "In strong pointed sentences you beat me." That emotional quality gave vigor and energy to his utterances.

John said to him, 'You were made for this very thing, [full redemption by faith now] just here you are in your element.' The fundamentals he set forth with simplicity, with no more words than seemed necessary. He went right to the point. For him, language was to reveal, not to conceal, thought.

He spoke with authority: by awakening and convincing, he precipitated decision and got results. Like his two colleagues, his sermons seemed to individuals to be personal, "for me." The great secret of his success was his patent sincerity. This made him fervent, even passionate. He preached not dry general truths but what he felt. He spoke out of his own soul and breathed earnestness. He yearned for folks to heed his message.

His was a divine call; a dispensation of the Gospel was committed unto him. He would "not run before God's call, nor stay a moment after." His main business was to call sinners to righteousness. Those to whom he preached knew they had personal sins in addition to the "original sin", much voiced in those days. His one passion was to hold up Christ and to turn sinners to Him. Central truths were his stock in trade as a preacher: the one thing needful; God's grace; salvation by faith now; love of God to sinners; the life, death, and resurrection of Christ and blessings consequent:

*"My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread thro' all the earth abroad,
The honors of Thy name.*

*"He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean;
His blood availed for me."*

He preached and sang his own experience:

*"No condemnation now I dread,
Jesus, with all in Him, is mine:
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach th' eternal throne,
And claim the crown, thro' Christ my own."*

Frequently he or he and his auditors "broke out." He gave the Holy Spirit a chance, "pouring" or "bursting" in on him and them, like a flood, overturning all before the power of God. At such times he seemed to be carried out of the body. On one such occasion he wrote: 'For near two hours I was enabled to preach . . . I broke out again and again into prayer and exhortation, believing not one word would return empty. Seventy years would be overpaid by one such opportunity'; and on another: "While I was, in great love, warning the bands, the Spirit of power came down; the fountain was set open; my mouth and my heart were enlarged; and I spoke such words as I cannot repeat." "Aflame" with devotion, he set "fire" to congregations; the Holy Spirit would "break into pieces" and "melt together."

His own sensitivity prepared for the Spirit. One night he could not sleep, thinking of the young man Absalom. Once when the Spirit descended upon him, he wrote, 'I think I could have lain down my life for their salvation; the backsliders were most upon my heart.'

Three descriptions by hearers tell vividly of his power and prowess. One for whom Mr. Wright, the plumber (Charles' brother-in-law), worked, went one day with Wright to hear Charles preach and wrote, "I find his business is only with the heart and the affections; as to the understanding, that must shift for itself . . . most of the clergy are in the contrary extreme, and apply themselves only to the head." A sympathetic but discriminating listener, Joseph Williams, a carpet weaver, records his impression both of the preaching and of the meeting with the Society: "Standing on a table in a field, the preacher, with eyes and hands lifted to heaven, prayed with uncommon fervour and fluency. He then preached about an hour in such a manner as I scarce ever heard any man preach. Though I have heard many a finer sermon, yet I think I never heard any man discover such evi-

dent signs of vehement desires [to benefit his hearers] . . . With unusual fervour he acquitted himself as an ambassador for Christ, and although he used no notes, yet he delivered his thoughts in a rich copious variety of expression, and with so much propriety, that I could not observe anything incoherent through the whole performance, which he concluded with singing, prayer and the usual benediction.

"Afterward I waited on him at Mr. Norman's. He received me in a very friendly manner. Before he would take any refreshment, he, with a few friends that waited on him, sung a hymn, and then prayed for a blessing, as at set meals. After tea, we sung another hymn, and then I went with them to the religious society, and found the place so thronged that it was with great difficulty we reached the center of it. We found them singing a hymn; he then prayed; and proceeded to expound the twelfth chapter of the gospel of St. John, in a sweet, savoury, spiritual manner. This was followed by singing another hymn; and then he prayed over a great number of bills presented by the society, about twenty of which respected spiritual cases. Never did I hear such praying. Never did I see or hear such evident marks of fervency in the service of God . . . At the close of every petition, a serious Amen, like a gentle rushing sound of waters, ran through the whole audience. Such evident marks of a lively fervent devotion, I was never witness to before. If there be such a thing as heavenly music on earth, I heard it there."

James Sutcliff thus describes a characteristic sermon of Charles' old age, preached just a year and a half before his death:

"The preacher was an aged gentleman in a plain coat and wig. His voice was clear, his aspect venerable and his manner devout. In his introductory sentences he was very deliberate, and presently made a pause of some moments. This I attributed to his age and infirmities, but in a while he made a second pause, twice as long as before. This to me was painful, but the people took no notice of it. However he helped himself out by quoting three verses of the hymn:

*"Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary."*

And when I was most affected with sympathy for his infirmities, as I then thought, he quoted his text in Greek with remarkable fluency. Coming then to the great salvation, he was on his high horse, age and infirmities were left behind. It was a torrent of doctrine, of exhortation and eloquence bearing down all before him."

He loved to preach; to him it was "life and health and peace." It

buoyed him up, endowed him with supernatural strength. When he was ill or weak, preaching either overcame or made him forget his illness and "increased his strength." He frequently preached even five times in one day and says of such occasions, "Preaching five times a day, when he calls me to it, no more wearies the flesh than preaching once."

Opposition stirred him up: "My spirit revived at the sight of scoffers" in the audience. He was *en rapport* with his hearers: "I found the spirit of the colliers before I began to speak"; "I drank into their spirit."

But his bodily weakness would assert itself in the reaction after the stimulation of preaching. "After preaching, the messenger of Satan came. He seldom fails me after success." It was reaction not only from much preaching but from his intensity. A preacher who depends on inspiration and "the glow" has occasions when the fire does not seem to kindle. "Seldom have I been more alive in the morning or more dead in the evening;" "The words rebounded as from a wall of brass. So great a bar I have seldom felt." But "I was very dead in delivering it, yet the Word was mixed with faith in some that heard it, as they afterward testified."

Such a nature too would have its ups and downs. His almost constant poor health accounts in part for this, but he had moods of more or less morbid depression all his life; they began early. His mother wrote him in 1739, deprecating such a mood. In that he contrasted with John, who once said that he did not remember to have felt lowness of spirits one quarter of an hour since he was born.

When he was low, Charles was tempted to leave off preaching; sometimes this would be combined with his shrinking humility. "I am so buffeted both before and after [preaching], that, were I not forcibly detained, I should fly from every human face." When over-depressed, he envied the dying and would wish also to "escape out of life," or during a period of success, he would "drop the body" for joy.

Sometimes, losing himself in the occasion, he would preach two or three hours. Usually the sermons were much shorter. In a letter to his wife he once wrote, "I lately blamed Mr. Venn for his long sermon and, at the Foundery preached one of near an hour and a half long to about five thousand listening souls . . . I was much drawn out . . . by my keeping the people so long . . ." When he ran long, the "sermon" was likely to include a prayer, exhortation, and singing.

A printed sermon seems impersonal and short. Samuel, Jr. once playfully charged his brothers with dishonesty because their oral sermons were three-quarters of an hour long while the printed sermons

were but short snips or notes. Charles' vehemence and earnestness cannot be put into print.

Estimates of numbers in the congregations of George Whitefield, John Wesley, and Charles Wesley should be regarded as "estimates only." Like some modern preachers, they apparently were optimistic. Unquestionably, however, at times they drew large crowds. Charles must have had a rich voice, suited for singing. In the open air, he lifted it up "like a trumpet."

At first he wrote out and read his sermons. But that did not lend itself to open air preaching. The common people wanted to be talked to, not read to. Bishop Sheen, explaining why he preached without notes, told of the old Irish lady who, watching a Bishop as he read a sermon, exclaimed, "If he doesn't remember it, how does he expect us to?" Charles tried the experiment of using no notes in October, 1738, with fear and trembling. It worked well. That helped make him a successful itinerant evangelist.

A knowledge and use of shorthand was of great value to both brothers in letter, journals, conferences, sermons, and hymns. It was especially helpful to Charles in writing hymns. Such skill is desirable for any preacher. John had been taught one system at Oxford, but switched to Byrom's system under Charles' advice and insistence.

It may seem strange to say the eighteenth century in England was an emotional era, but in a sense it was. Bishop McConnell says that they judged a sermon by its power to set people weeping. Charles' audiences were often so set; they were "melted into tears on every side"; "all present were in tears either of sorrow or joy." Similar records were frequent—tears seemed normal.

Unlike John, whose close reasoning produced outbreaks in others but not in himself, but like George Whitefield and many of the early Methodist preachers, Charles frequently burst into tears. Sometimes the mere sight of those before him would start the tears. Some congregations "I could not look on without tears." Backsliders were "besought with tears." Again, "the love of Christ crucified so constrained me that I burst into tears and felt strong sympathy with Him in His sufferings." Sometimes they arose from joy in fellowship: "for two hours we wept and rejoiced." Often preacher and audience wept together: "I wept with those who wept." Even his warnings were tender: "I warned them with many tears."

The Wesleys' beliefs should be weighed on the background of the eighteenth century, not on that of the twentieth. They, as all Tories of that day, accepted the "divine right of kings." John at least, and probably Charles, set the age of the earth at a little over six thousand

years. John decidedly taught a personal devil and ascribed to him not only the origin of evil in the world, but also many of his own discomforts and accidents. He also made much of good angels and of powers of darkness active in the world. Charles concurred but was somewhat sceptical, had reservations and would not advance the idea as publicly. Both accepted the idea of a millennial reign on earth. John probably spoke for both on the time of it when he wrote: "I have no opinion at all upon the head; I can determine nothing at all about it . . . I have only one thing to do—to save my soul and those that hear me."

But we should especially remember the then current beliefs and thinking when we discuss their ideas of Judgment and Hell. It was an age of arbitrary, even vindictive rulers; an age when torture was legal. The Puritans had left people morbidly believing in literal hell-fire. In fact, the orthodox and general belief was in a conscious, continual, endless material fire and suffering for the rejected. In an elegy on the Death of an Infant the father sets forth vividly the teaching of the times and his protest:

"They all deserve for Adam's sin to die

.

To die eternally theirs to have

In soul tormenting, everlasting fire:

To howl, and scream and shriek and writhe and rave

In vengeful flames that never shall expire.

.

Can this be any parent's voice?"

Yes, there was some protest against such an idea, but it was almost universally accepted openly, in silence, or in fear.

It is hard to understand why Charles Wesley included in *Hymns for Children* two on "Hell", parts of which read:

"There their tortured bodies lie,

Scorch'd by the consuming fire;

There their souls in torment lie,

Rock'd with pride and fierce desire;

** * * * **

"While they enjoy His heavenly love,

Must I in torments dwell?

And howl (while they sing hymns above)

And blow the flames of hell?"

Inclusion of these hymns is difficult to understand even though the last is followed by

*"Ah no;—I still may turn and live,
For still His wrath delays;
He now vouchsafes a kind reprieve,
And offers me His grace."*

One hymn on "Hell" is followed by another of "Heaven."

God could be a vindictive Judge; his wrath, human-like anger. The Judgment was an awful ordeal; especially there loomed the horrible outcome as a possibility, or probability, as the popular Calvinism had disseminated. Against such a background the Wesleys preached. The people were made vividly aware of it, as Charles Wesley had written,

*"Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand;
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A point of time, a moment's space
Removes me to that heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in hell."*

(Misled by a "harmless hoax", many Wesley publications ascribe the origin of this poem to Jekyl Island with a copy to "Mrs. Oglethorpe", ignoring the fact that Charles Wesley's detailed diary makes no reference to being on Jekyl Island and Oglethorpe was not yet married!)

Many awakenings came out of this fear, as the testimonies selected by Wesley for the *Arminian Magazine*, including those of Grace Murray and Richard Whatcoat, bear witness. This accounts in part for many scenes under their ministry. Indeed, such an experience of fear and agony was a part of the expected ordeal and was even sought. One, whose written experience was included in the *Arminian Magazine*, says: "Attending to the experience of the people, I observed that almost all of them, during the time of conviction, were exercised with horrible fears and terrors, and thence I concluded, it was necessary I should have the same." And another wrote: "The Scriptures universally testified that I must believe or perish . . . Many times I lost my way by too scrupulously regarding the Experience of others, yet I had never found anything like despair unless I wilfully reasoned myself into it; nor could I attain to any deep terrors, which were too much insisted on as a necessary branch of conviction."

Whatever safeguards the Wesleys personally had, too many of their untrained, blunt lay preachers indulged overmuch in the terrors of

the law and in the damnation of hell. It was easy to denounce and to have a place to consign those who opposed or were indifferent.

John Wesley preached one sermon on Hell. It was in the background during all his utterances and he often referred to it. One half—the first half—of the required entrance to his Societies was and is, “a desire to flee from the wrath to come.”

But he discriminated. His method was: “After a general declaration of the love of God to sinners, and His willingness that they should be saved, to preach the Law, in the strongest, the closest, the most searching manner possible; only intermixing the Gospel here and there and showing it, as it were, afar off.” “In preaching any part of the Law, to keep the love of Christ continually before their eyes . . . variously intermixing more or less of the Law according to their various necessities.”

This was Charles’ idea also. Like John, he took advantage of the fear motive, but he also fitted the message to his audiences as the following extracts from his *Journal* show: “I warned them of impending judgments”; “I labored to bring to a sense of their want”; “I . . . did not prophesy smooth things”; “preached the law which is extremely wanted here; the poor sinners have been surfeited with smooth words . . .”; “. . . set the terrors of the Lord against them and a horrible dread overwhelmed . . .” His discourse was as mixed as the multitude in his audience,—“law, gospel, threatenings, promises, which I trust the Spirit applied to their several cases.”

But his spirit more naturally turned to the positive. How much did he have to do with the pronouncement of the 1745 Conference? After an acknowledgment that some assistants preached more on the wrath than on the love of God, it was asked, ‘Need we ever preach the terrors of the law to those who know they are accepted of Him?’ It was answered, “No, it is folly to do so, for love is to them the strongest of all motives.”

Yes, with both, but especially with the more human Charles, the love message predominated: Charles’ great theme was “Love Divine, all loves excelling.” He loved his hearers, preached lovingly and, above all others, on the love theme. The subject and manner drew all people, especially the young, to him.

John frequently called himself a man of one book. But John probably read and commented on far more books than Charles, although we cannot be sure, since Charles wrote fewer *Journals* and did not record his reading. Charles, however, was even more a “man of one book.” He knew his Bible intimately and extensively. A modern reader may conclude that in those days when literary and

historical study was undeveloped, he sometimes did violence to a text or read too much into it, but that is only incidental. He knew the Bible so well that he could open to any text and preach from it. And he often did.

As has been noted, his preaching in general dealt with the main truths of religion revolving around "Redemption." His extempore sermons and those unpremeditated on a chance text were variations of "Be ye reconciled to God"—whether of warning, "The Great and Terrible Day"; or of invitation, "Come unto Me"; or of entreaty, "Repent and believe." In lectures at Oxford and in a sermon at Westminster Abbey, he spoke about Justification by Faith, a favorite theme. His poetic imagination made the stories of Blind Bartimeus, the Good Samaritan, and Wrestling Jacob, as well as other narratives exceedingly vivid. Heaven was always close; he delighted to talk about it and preached many triumphant funeral sermons for those who had "fought a good fight."

He chose texts and subjects suited to occasions—in exhorting the Societies: "take the whole armor", "continue in word and in prayer"; in the open and to holiday crowds: "Ho! everyone that thirsteth", "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by", etc.; in persecution and times of calamity: "God our Refuge", "Comfort ye", etc.; in saying farewell after a sojourn in a place: "Holding Fast"; to prisoners: "Redemption"; in times of national upheaval: "Fear God, honor the King"; in the unfinished shell of a new building: "The hands of Jerubbubel have laid the foundations", etc.; in the Church controversy: "I will bring a third part through the fire." Being about to preach when the earthquake of March 8, 1750, hit London, he immediately quieted his audience by quoting, "Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved . . ." For the next Sunday he prepared a sermon on "The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes", an abbreviated form of which is always published in "Wesley's Sermons."

Occasionally he gave utterance to general truths and his wit would show through:

"Love will do more than argument and prayer most of all."

"My work, I very well know, keeps me alive more than it wears me out."

"Who can stand before envy? It is the Minister's besetting sin."

". . . some of them came out of spite to me. We bless God for *this* cause of offense and pray it may never be removed."

"I betook myself to my usual bed, the floor" (in Frederica).

"I saw a strange sight, the sun shining in Cornwall!"

"... who expressed their compassion by wishing all our necks had been broken."

"We lost our way as often as we *could*."

"... but the bacon and hen were such, that my teeth could not penetrate them."

"Here a Clergyman spoke much and nothing."

"They got their candles ready and gave thanks (i.e., got drunk) beforehand."

"Yesterday my doctor flattered without hurting me; for I did not believe one word he said."

"An old woman's hooping cough made me keep a watchnight against my will."

His most noted sermon was before the University of Oxford on Sunday, April 4, 1742, when he was thirty-four years of age. When published, it went into thirty-seven printings and hundreds of sub-printings. One biographer doubts if any other sermon went into so many editions or was productive of so much good. His text was Ephesians V:14, "Awake, thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light." He began by giving his outline:

"In discoursing on these words, I shall, with the help of God,

" I. Describe the sleepers to whom they are spoken,

" II. Inforce the exhortation, Awake thou that sleepeth, and arise from the dead, And,

"III. Explain the promise to such as do awake and arise; Christ shall give thee light."

Under "Inforce the exhortation", we can yet feel his torrential, passionate, persuasive utterance which made him so effective as a preacher:

"II. 1. Wherefore, Awake thou that sleepeth, and arise from the dead. God calleth thee now by my mouth, and bids thee know thyself, thou fallen spirit; thy true state and only concern below. What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise! call upon thy God, if so be thy God will think upon thee that thou perish not. A mighty tempest is stirred up round about thee, and thou art sinking into the depths of perdition, the gulph of God's judgments. If thou wouldst escape them, cast thyself into them. Judge thyself, and thou shalt not be judged of the Lord." * * *

"5. Awake thou everlasting spirit, out of thy dream of worldly happiness. Did not God create thee for himself? Then thou canst not rest, till thou rest in him. Return thou wanderer. Fly back to thy ark. This is not thy home. Think not of building tabernacles here.

"6. In what state is thy soul? Was God, while I am yet speaking, to require it of thee, art thou ready to meet death and judgment? Canst thou stand in his sight, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? Art thou meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light? Hast thou fought the good fight, and kept the faith? Hast thou secured the one thing needful? Hast thou recovered the image of God, even righteousness and true holiness? Hast thou put off the old man, and put on the new? Art thou clothed upon with Christ?

"7. Hast thou oil in thy lamp? Grace in thy heart? Dost thou love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength? Is that mind in thee which was also in Christ Jesus? Art thou a Christian indeed? That is, a new creature? Are old things past away and all things become new?

"8. Art thou a partaker of the divine nature? Knowest thou not, that Christ is in thee, except thou be reprobate? Knowest thou that God dwelleth in thee, and thou in God, by his Spirit which he hath given thee? Knowest thou not that thy body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which thou hast of God? Hast thou the witness in thyself? The earnest of thine inheritance? Art thou sealed by that Spirit of promise, unto the day of redemption? Hast thou received the Holy Ghost? * * *

"10. Yet on the authority of God's word, and our own Church, I must repeat the question, Hast thou received the Holy Ghost? If thou hast not thou are not yet a Christian: for a Christian is a man that is anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power! Thou are not yet made a partaker of pure religion, and undefiled. Dost thou know what religion is? That it is a participation of the divine nature; the life of God in the soul of man; Christ formed in thee, the hope of glory? Happiness and holiness; heaven begun upon earth; a kingdom of God within thee; not meat and drink; no outward thing; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? An everlasting kingdom brought into thy soul: a peace of God that passeth all understanding, a joy unspeakable, and full of glory?"

His concluding paragraphs mingle prayer to God and appeals to his hearers:

"14. O God, in the midst of wrath remember mercy! Be glorified in our reformation not in our destruction! Let us hear the rod, and him that appointed it. Now that thy judgments are abroad in the earth, let the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

"15. My brethren, it is high time for us to awake out of sleep,

before the great trumpet of the Lord be blown, and our land becomes a field of blood. O may we speedily see the things that make for our peace, before they are hid from our eyes! Turn thou us, O good Lord, and let thine anger cease from us. O Lord, look down from heaven, behold and visit this vine; and cause us to know the time of our visitation. Help us, O God of our salvation for the glory of thy name: O deliver us, and be merciful to our sins, for thy name's sake: and so will we not go back from Thee, O let us live and we shall call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, shew the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us; unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Pastor

The autumn of 1756 is usually assigned as the period when Charles ceased to itinerate and became parochial. He made his last trip to the north earlier that year, then gradually lessened his travels and settled down to a parish, or rather parishes. This Chapter is designated "Pastor" instead of "Evangelist" or "Preacher"; but he was also a pastor while an evangelist and never ceased to be a preaching evangelist.

But why did he settle down to parishes? Various reasons are alleged. First, his nature; he had always sought retirement and obscurity. In 1736 he wrote to John to get Mr. Oglethorpe's judgment on the advisability of his having a small village pastorate, "remote from any town where I may hide myself from all business and from all company." This idea persisted. Shortly after his marriage he told some brethren he wanted more retirement and intended to appropriate all mornings to study and self-improvement. He also wrote his wife that he believed he would not stir from home except to visit the sick or to preach: "my love of retirement increases with my business."

Second, his health; he was always more fragile than wiry John and was not adapted for constant traveling. In 1753, John had admonished him that they should counsel together before Charles took any journey in the country; partly, no doubt, so that they would not cover the same ground. Charles did not like governing or overseeing. John did. And his brother was content to leave that to John.

London and Bristol had become large parishes, too large to be handled efficiently by itinerants. They needed pastoral supervision beyond the ability of lay-preachers. By taking charge of these important parishes, Charles freed John to travel more over the rest of England, for which he was more fitted and in which he delighted.

No doubt his differences with John in the Grace Murray episode and his loyalty to the church had something to do with it. While Charles had strong influence with the preachers, he found it increasingly embarrassing to meet with them and oppose their wishes, which were more and more tending toward separation from the Church.

The claims of his wife and family weighed heavily on one of his temperament, and furthermore he had already traveled the first seven

years of his married life. His daughter, Sarah, after his death, said that care of the family was one of the main reasons why he ceased to itinerate; but as she was not born then, she may have read back later developments into that period.

Probably all these factors combined in various degrees to produce this change.

John Wesley wrote the very year of Charles' change, "I know, were I to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach myself and most of my congregation asleep." But Charles preached no less in his new capacity; in fact, he preached daily as long as he had strength. He was as busy or busier than ever! There were four principal and several smaller chapels in London besides many Societies in the neighborhood; also at least six preaching places on the Bristol Circuit, to say nothing of others in the vicinity or on the way between. Charles preached at these and oversaw them. He added closer pastoral relations to as much preaching. His only vacation was found in a change of work. Like many college presidents, he never found any problem so difficult that he could not get relief from it by turning to one more difficult.

For fifteen years while his family lived in Bristol, Charles spent from eight to ten months each year in London; yet he longed continually for home. What poignancy lay behind one sentence to his wife, "I count the days between us and look toward Charles Street, sleeping and waking!" He was in London when his wife contracted the most virulent form of smallpox at Bristol. And when his first-born, then his only child, died of smallpox at the age of sixteen months, he could not get away from London even for the infant's funeral. His self-denial these first fifteen years of his "ministry" cannot be even imagined.

For several years Charles had contemplated moving from Bristol to London. In fact, he wrote his wife as early as 1760, "As I shall probably take much more public care upon me than I have ever done heretofore, my office will require me to spend more time in town [London], perhaps *to settle here*." In 1771, after Charles had looked at several houses and while parishioners in London were raising money for one, a wealthy convert, Mrs. Gumley, whom Mrs. Charles Wesley had visited and who was god-mother to Charles, Jr., offered, without charge, a long lease on her completely furnished house in the Marylebone section of London. So Charles could write his wife on May 27, 1771, "Today Mrs. Gumley told me she had refused several who would have taken her house; that all is ready for you, even small beer." He got the lease gratis but had to pay a small ground-rent annually.

The house was three miles from the Foundery. Every day Charles would make the trip there in his great cloak on a little pony. On the way he held a loose rein as he read or composed hymns.

In his London pastorate, he renewed his friendship with Lord Mansfield, whom he had befriended as a boy at Westminster. He also advised Lord Dartmouth about religion, met Samuel Johnson several times, and made a warm friend of Wilberforce, to whom he gave a blessing when they met at a dinner at Hannah More's.

He administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper every Sunday. It had meant much to him at Oxford and all his life; his *Journal* abounds in such expressions as: "It was a season of love, a time of great refreshing"; "In the Sacrament the skies poured down righteousness"; "In the Sacrament He carried us quite above ourselves and all earthly things." He also made it mean much to others: "In conference, I found one who had received forgiveness in the Sacrament."

He was much beloved by the London and Bristol parishioners and had a great influence over them; in general, they accepted his judgment.

Great as Charles was as a preacher, he was greater as a pastor. His periods of gloom may have increased with age, but his religion was one of joy. He constantly sang:

*"How happy are they who the Saviour obey,
And have laid up their treasure above;
Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."*

*"Jesus all the day long was my joy and my song;
O that all his salvation might see!
'He hath loved me' I cried, 'He hath suffer'd and died,
To redeem such a rebel as me."*

In one of his sermons, Weatherhead tells of a Chinese who said of a missionary doctor: "He took my sickness into his own heart." Weatherhead added, "He could not care more." So did Charles Wesley. He was extremely sensitive to others' needs and personally suffered with them. He sang with honesty:

*"Thy mind throughout my life be shown
While listening to the wretch's cry,
The widow's and the orphan's groan,
On mercy's wings I swiftly fly,
The poor and helpless to relieve
My life, my all, for them to give."*

He was a blessing to the sick, whom he visited regularly. True to his calling, he always prayed and exhorted with them: "I called on a friend near death yet unprepared for it and faithfully, not fashionably, told him his condition." His many letters of consolation were tender and helpful; in fact, he was an effective letter writer, as John had acknowledged. He wrote many personal and pastoral letters, admonishing or cheering as each case demanded. In a pastoral letter to a society in Leeds he reveals his longing: "My Master, I am persuaded, sent me unto you at this time to confirm your souls in the present truth, in your calling, in the old paths of Gospel ordinance. O that you may be a pattern to the flock for your unanimity and love! O that you may continue stedfast in the World, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer (private, family and public) till we meet around the great white throne."

The quality of sympathy made his intercessory prayers truly remarkable. He yearned; therefore he prayed.

Both while an itinerant evangelist and in the pastorate, he spent much time examining groups and individuals, at which his penetrating power was specially apt. Preaching alone was not sufficient; he constantly appraised the Societies: "I reprov'd the slack and encouraged the orderly walkers"; "I employed the time in examining the Society and took in several new ones and put out others, who had been too hastily admitted." He used supper, tea, dinner, even breakfast, for personal interviews; his counseling load grew exceedingly heavy: "I am forced to allow more time for conferences. Today the weak ones found me full employment from three until eleven." A woman whom John had let pass could not survive Charles' searching examination; he was not easily deceived. His examination once led him to exclaim, "We certainly have been too rash and easy in allowing persons for believers on their own testimony, nay, even persuading them into a false opinion of themselves. Some souls it is doubtless necessary to encourage, but it should be done with *prudence* and caution."

He also talked kindly but plainly to lay preachers, about whom he was always spiritually concerned. When John said there must be a supply of them, Charles opined that gifts should accompany grace; "should we not regulate, reform and bring into discipline the preachers we have, before we look for more?" He also talked of "silencing" an inadequate preacher. While usually he found Societies praiseworthy, he did not hesitate to rebuke and to expel when necessary: "I reprov'd the Society," but kindly so that they "were all melted to tears"; "I rebuked the Society at Newcastle for their slackness and offenses of various kinds"; "I expelled one who had taken a bribe for

his vote"; "I was forced to cut off a rotten member but felt such love and pity at the time as humbled me in the dust."

Proselyting bothered him; he found Methodists easy victims. To guard against it he advised close walking with God in all commandments and ordinances and more visiting by the preachers from house to house.

He promoted family religion by precept and example. In visiting families he was a blessing as he taught, recited Scripture, sang, told experiences, and exhorted. Together or apart, he and his wife spent the hour from five to six each afternoon in prayer, even as it had been in the home at Epworth.

Adding to the Church was his great joy: "rejoicing that God hath added to his living Church seven more souls through my ministry." Those who had indulged in that "grand old Methodist" practice of backsliding were special objects of his efforts and their return to the fold his great delight: "I received another straggler as I do every day."

Baptisms were incidental to his ministry. He tells of the baptism of a Dissenter's child and of two African princes after instruction. Charles' spirit on such occasions affected the candidates. We are not surprised to read one was overpowered and speechless and had "joy unspeakable" in that ceremony.

As party spirit was alien to him, he spent much time in composing differences: "The day was well spent in making up a difference among the principal members of the Society"; "I made up a difference between two of the brethren." He even tried to reconcile his brother John and a preacher whose letter John agreed to let Charles answer. He wrote the preacher, "Out of true impartial love to you both, I long for peace between you and my brother . . . If I know my own heart, I have nothing there but tender disinterested love for him and for you: and it is, and must be a serious grief for me that you are not cordially affected to each other." Amid all the above were miscellaneous pastoral activities, treatment of an adulterous woman, and attempted exorcism by prayer. One time he testified, "I had the satisfaction of bringing back to Mr. Erskine his formerly disobedient daughter." And he brought to repentance and confession one in prison accused of murdering his own daughter.

Charles' attitude toward death is impressive. In contrasting his *Journal* with John's, we find that John's frequently describes preternatural events among other subjects, and some death scenes; while Charles', although it contains a great many death scenes with accounts of funerals, has none of the preternatural. Charles seemed to

revel in watching people depart this life, and he wrote innumerable elegies on the deceased.

As a result of Methodist teaching, especially regarding a vivid consciousness of God with them, they met departure from this life courageously, even triumphantly. Said Charles, "I have observed that all our people, without exception, be they ever so dark or weak before, when they come to die, recover their confidence." It was noteworthy that generally, "The Methodists die well"—peacefully, joyously. Charles gloried in it: "Here is another witness to the truth of the gospel we preach. Commend me to a religion, upon which I can trust my soul, while entering eternity." Said a doctor to Charles, "Most people die for fear of dying, but I have never met with such people as yours. They are none of them afraid of death, but are calm and patient, and resigned to the last."

Charles' frequent desire to die seems morbid to us. His *Journal* abounds in wishes that he might change places with the dying or follow the dead: "What would I give to be on the death-bed"; "I longed to be in his place"; "at sight of his coffin my soul . . . struggled as a bird to burst the cage." At first we are inclined to associate this with his fits of despondency, but it was often associated with joy and happiness. No, it was something deeper than mere melancholia. It was like Paul's "having a desire to depart and be with Christ for it is far better." (Phil. I:23) Charles talked about "being taken from the evil to come" and being "safe" in the Lord:

*"Fain would I leave this earth below,
Of pain and sin the dark abode;
Where shadowy joy, or solid woe,
Allures or tears me from my God;
Doubtful and insecure of bliss,
Since death alone confirms me his."*

* * *

*"How happy every child of grace,
Who knows his sins forgiven!
'This earth' he cries 'is not my place,
I seek a place in heaven;
A country far from mortal sight,
The land of rest, the saints' delight
Yet, O by faith I see,
The land of rest, the saints' delight
The heaven prepared for me."*

His joyous, triumphant attitude toward death was mainly caused

by the fact that the spiritual world seemed so near and the "other side" so real and blessed. Eternity was round about. On earth the saved were only pilgrims and strangers. They still had fellowship with the departed, and joined with Charles in singing:

*"Let all saints terrestrial sing
With those to glory gone;
For all the servants of our King,
In earth and heaven, are one.*

*"One family we dwell in Him,
One Church above, beneath,
Thro' now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death;*

*"One army of the living God,
To His command we bow;
Part of His host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.*

*"E'en now by faith we join our hands
With those that went before,
And great the blood-besprinkled bands
On the eternal shore."*

No wonder Charles could also write, "The happy soul had left a smile on the clay to tell where she was gone"; and could sing, "O lovely appearance of death." Deathbeds therefore were scenes of joy and singing, occasions of triumph, of rejoicing over "release." In funeral processions they sang songs of praise and victory. Perhaps mother Susanna set the fashion when she asked her children, as soon as she was "released, to sing a psalm of praise to God." Perhaps the Wesleys associated manifestation of no fear of death with real religion, after seeing the Moravians in a storm on shipboard. Methodists were taught to die well. It was expected, therefore was sought and forthcoming. The expectation elicited the realization. They witnessed their faith by their dying as well as by their living.

The other outstanding feature of Charles' *Journal* is his detailed accounts of his frequent visits to prisoners. He seemed especially to have them on his heart. He visited prisons in various parts of England and Ireland, recording his many experiences at length in his *Journal*. His interest mainly was with those condemned to die. The "Ordinary," as the Prison Chaplain was called, was often opposed and uncooperative; generally he was inefficient, "worse than no minister at all."

Many accounts Charles gives, but one shows so vividly his spirit, methods, and results that it should be recalled in his own words from his *Journal*: "At Mr. Sparks' request, I went with him, Mr. Bray, and Mr. Burnham, to Newgate, and preached to the ten malefactors under sentence of death; but with a heavy heart. My old prejudices against the possibility of a death-bed repentance still hung upon me; and I could hardly hope there was mercy for those whose time was so short. But in the midst of my languid discourse, a sudden spirit of faith came upon me, and I promised them all pardon, in the name of Jesus Christ, if they would then, as at the last hour, repent, and believe the gospel. Nay, I did believe they would accept of the proffered mercy, and could not help telling them, 'I had no doubt but God would give me every soul of them.'"

The following excerpts from his *Journal* show the deep-seated concern that Charles and the other members of the Holy Club felt for the imprisoned felons who had been condemned and were about to be publicly hanged, though the conditions under which the executions were carried out and the eagerness of the crowd who watched them seem now almost incredible.

"Tuesday, July 11.—I preached with earnestness to the prisoners from the second lesson. One or two of them were deeply affected."

"The pain in my side was very violent; but I looked up to Christ, and owned His healing power."

"Wednesday, July 12.—I preached at Newgate to the condemned felons, and visited one of them in his cell, sick of a fever—a poor black that had robbed his master. I told him of One who came down from heaven to save lost sinners, and him in particular; described the sufferings of the Son of God, His sorrows, agony, and death. He listened with all the signs of eager astonishment; the tears trickled down his cheeks while he cried, 'What! was it for me? Did God suffer all this for so poor a creature as me?' I left him waiting for the salvation of God."

"Thursday, July 13.—I read prayers and preached at Newgate, and administered the sacrament to our friends, with five of the felons. I was much affected and assisted in prayer for them; and exhorted them with great comfort and confidence.

"Friday, July 14.—I received the sacrament from the Ordinary;

spake strongly to the poor malefactors; and to the sick negro in the condemned hole, moved by his sorrow and earnest desire of Christ Jesus.

“Saturday, July 15.—I preached there again with an enlarged heart; and rejoiced with my poor happy black; who now *believes* the Son of God loved him, and gave himself for him.”

Sunday, July 16.—. . . Very weak and faint, yet was I strengthened to preach for above an hour. I was carried to bed full of pain, expecting my fever; . . .”

Monday, July 17.—I rose free from pain. At Newgate I preached on death (which they must suffer the day after tomorrow). Mr. Sparks assisted in giving the sacrament. Another clergyman was there. Newington asked me to go in the coach with him. At one I was with the black in his cell, James Hutton assisting. Two more of the malefactors came. I had great help and power in prayer. One rose, and said, he felt his heart all on fire, so as he never found himself before; he was all in a sweat; believed Christ died for him. I found myself overwhelmed with the love of Christ to sinners. The black was quite happy. The other criminal was in an excellent temper; believing, or on the point of it. I talked with another, concerning faith in Christ: he was greatly moved. The Lord, I trust, will help *his* unbelief also.

“I joined at Bray’s with Hutton, Holland, Burton, in fervent prayer and thanksgiving. At six I carried Bray and Fish to Newgate again, and talked chiefly with Hudson and Newington. N. declared he had felt, some time ago in prayer, inexpressible joy and love; but was much troubled at its being so soon withdrawn. The Lord gave power to pray. They were deeply affected. We have great hopes of both.

“Tuesday, July 18.—The Ordinary read prayers and preached. I administered the sacrament to the black, and eight more; having first instructed them in the nature of it. I spake comfortably to them afterwards.

“In the cells, one told me that whenever he offered to pray, or had a serious thought, something came and hindered him; was with him almost continually; and once appeared. After we had prayer for him *in faith*, he rose amazingly comforted, full of joy and love; so that we could not doubt his having received the atonement.

“At night I was locked in with Bray in one of the cells. We wrestled in mighty prayer. All the criminals were present, and all delightfully cheerful. The soldier, in particular, found his comfort and joy

increase every moment. Another, from the time he communicated, has been in perfect peace. Joy was visible in all their faces. We sang:

*'Behold the Saviour of mankind,
Nailed to the shameful tree!
How vast the love that Him inclined
To bleed and die for thee, etc.'*

IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST TRIUMPHANT HOURS I HAVE EVER KNOWN

"Wednesday, July 19.—I rose very heavy, and backward to visit them for the last time. At six I prayed and sang with them all together. The Ordinary would read prayers, and preached most miserably. Mr. Sparks and Mr. Broughton were present. I felt my heart full of tender love to the latter. He administered. All the ten received. Then he prayed; and I after him.

"At half-past nine their irons were knocked off, and their hands tied. I went in a coach with Sparks, Washington, and a friend of Newington's (N. himself not being permitted.) By half-hour past ten we came to Tyburn, waited till eleven; then were brought the children appointed to die. I got upon the cart [Prisoners were carried to the gallows in a cart, the ropes placed about the necks, then the cart was driven out from under them] with Sparks and Broughton: the Ordinary endeavoured to follow, when the poor prisoners begged he might not come; and the mob kept him down.

"I prayed first, then Sparks and Broughton. We had prayed before that our Lord would show there was a power superior to the fear of death. Newington had quite forgot his pain. They were all cheerful; full of comfort, peace, and triumph; assuredly persuaded Christ had died for them, and waited to receive them into paradise. Greenway was impatient to be with Christ.

"The black had spied me coming out of the coach, and saluted me with his looks. As often as his eyes met mine, he smiled with the most composed, delightful countenance I ever saw. Read caught hold of my hand in a transport of joy. Newington seemed perfectly pleased. Hudson declared he was never better, or more at ease, in mind and body. None showed any natural terror of death: no fear, or crying, or tears. All expressed their desire of our following them to paradise. I never saw such calm triumph, such incredible indifference to dying. We sang several hymns; particularly,

*Behold the Saviour of mankind
Nailed to the shameful tree;*

and the hymn entitled, 'Faith in Christ,' which concludes,

*A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
Into Thy hands I fall;
Be Thou my life, my righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all.*

"We prayed Him, in earnest faith, to receive their spirits. I could do nothing but rejoice: kissed Newington and Hudson; took leave of each in particular. Mr. Broughton bade them not to be surprised when the cart should draw away. They cheerfully replied, they should not; expressed some concern how we should get back to our coach. We left them going to meet their Lord, ready for the Bridegroom. When the cart drew off, not one stirred, or struggled for life, but meekly gave up their spirits. Exactly at twelve they were turned off. I spoke a few suitable words to the crowd; and returned, full of peace and confidence in our friends' happiness. *That hour under the gallows was the most blessed hour of my life.*"

Charles' last publication, in his old age, was *Prayers for Condemned Malefactors*, on a copy of which he wrote, "These prayers were answered on April 28, 1785, on nineteen malefactors, who all died penitent. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me."

In his last years Charles had some trouble from old age. He and one other ordained clergyman were assigned to London with several lay preachers. Charles insisted on always preaching when able at City Road, the new and most desirable Chapel. The lay preachers were jealous and a dispute arose (also at Bristol). Perhaps they may have been more popular preachers. They complained and appealed to John, and blamed Charles and the other ordained man that they had so few opportunities—alleging it was because they were not Church-ordained. Charles wrote John that he preached twice a Sunday in the Chapel, "(1) because after you I have the first right; (2) because I have so short a time to preach anywhere; (3) because I am fully persuaded I can do more good there than in any other place . . ." He disputed the lay preachers' claim, "that the work is stopping . . ." and made a spirited and logical defense. A compromise brought peace. John Wesley made some concession, which hurt Charles, and he wrote: "I think them in greatest danger through pride. If there was no man above them, what would become of them!—how would they tear one another in pieces! . . . You have no alternative but to conquer that spirit, or be conquered by it . . . if you had resolution, and would stand by me as firmly as I will by you."

An extempore speaker like Charles depends on inspiration, which may not always come, especially in old age. Pawson, a leader of the

opposition to him, acknowledged that when Charles was favored with activity of mind, his preaching was "truly profitable"; but otherwise it was, he declared, dry and profitless.

Two biographers, who had been among his hearers in his late years, tell of his opening the Bible and taking any text. One recounts how at time, when the Spirit seemed slow to move, he would seem to fail, repeat the process, and fail again; someone would fill the time when he would retire, or they would sing. Then he would return and perhaps revolve his talk around key words. The other biographer remembered his remarkable power of making truths striking and vivid with simple, forceful utterance, and how he seemed conscious of only God and sinners.

One amusing incident of these years shows him both vigorous and quite oblivious of his surroundings. From his high pulpit above the reading desk at which Coke had read the lesson, Charles swept off the hymn book with the sleeve of his gown, and it fell on Coke's head. Entirely unaware in his earnestness, Charles soon swept off his Bible likewise; but Coke, now alert, rose and caught it in his arms instead of upon his head!

Charles, once an itinerant evangelist, never lost his itinerating zeal as a preacher.

Family Man

Charles' marriage was a happy one and inaugurated a happy home. The wedding day began at 4:00 a.m. with three-and-a-half hours of prayer and singing, and into the day "we crowded as much prayer as we could." An auspicious beginning! In spite of their differences in ages, forty and twenty-three, it was a love match with acknowledged Divine reference.

Charles naturally composed much in this period; his idea regarding the union was thus expressed—

*"Jesus, with kindest pity see
Two souls that would be one in Thee
If now, accepted in Thy sight,
Thou dost our upright hearts unite,
Allow us, while on earth to prove
The noblest joys of heavenly love."*

But Charles had much to learn. His first encounter was with in-laws which he describes in a letter to a friend: "My wife . . . would gladly accompany me to town a month hence, if her strength permitted. But she is now tied to her house and sisters. Two of them we have with us in our convent. How the great world and we shall agree, I cannot say, but shall see by and by. If they pour in upon us so as quite to swallow up our time, I shall run away outright, to London, Cornwall, Newcastle, Ireland, or America."

He said Providence had strangely brought him the best gift Heaven could bestow, but he had not yet realized it all. Sally Gwynne Wesley proved to be a prize. Like Charles, she was short in stature. Educated at home under private tutors, she excelled in penmanship and music. The change from the ample, splendid mansion of a wealthy squire to a small, modest house and a very small income, she made handsomely and uncomplainingly. Of a warm nature, she was affectionate and sweet-tempered, modest without being dull, kind without condescension, and pious without gloominess. Moreover, perhaps from her mother, she inherited good business sense; in their first home in Bristol she drew up a complete inventory of their furniture.

Only one thing could stir her up—criticism of her husband. But

two faults have been alleged against her—too generous hospitality and spoiling her children; both, if faults, were faults of love.

In December 1753, while Charles was in London where John Wesley was seriously ill, Mrs. Charles came down with smallpox. Like her husband, she was averse to vaccination, then more or less a novelty, and regarded the disease as "of God". It was confluent smallpox, the worst kind, which goes through all the system, and from which very few recovered. Of course she wanted her husband and he hurried from London to her bedside. But because of his brother's illness, Charles was carrying a double load and had to return to London. What a wrench that must have been and what, indeed, must have been his mind, with his brother dangerously ill, and in momentary fear of getting word that his wife was dead! For twenty-two days she was in danger. Lady Huntingdon showed herself noble in disposition as well as in title. It was she who notified Charles of the affliction and in a later letter told him it was the worst kind of smallpox. Abandoning a planned visit to her son and disregarding all risk, she visited Mrs. Charles Wesley twice a day. Dr. Middleton, a close friend to Charles Wesley, attended Sally not only as a physician, but also as a father; this helped much.

She recovered, but so altered in appearance that her friends did not recognize her; youthful beauty was gone. Charles, however, declared that he admired her more than ever. She never mourned her loss but would say laughingly that it afforded great satisfaction to her husband, who "was glad to see her look so much older and better suited" to be his companion. The disparity in their ages was no longer apparent.

Soon after their marriage and before her disfigurement, she accompanied her husband on his preaching trips, usually riding behind him on horseback. She captivated all classes. Charles was proud of the way she was admired, "All look at my Sally with my eyes." On these trips she cheerfully suffered many inconveniences: at Leeds, for example, her sensitive soul shrank from passing through a roomful of sleeping men to get to her bedroom and she endured the shouted scorn of crude men in open-air audiences. Dangers also attended: a highwayman providentially passed them by; at least once she was in personal danger from a mob.

In the new, smaller home in Bristol it was her duty to entertain many of the lay preachers. Duty? Rather it became her delight. She saw them with Charles' eyes and felt toward them with Charles' spirit. Not only did she appreciate their humility, consecration, and holy living, but she loved them. To her they were truly great in that truest test of good breeding—that of the heart. With genuine emo-

tion, she declared none were better behaved, none more agreeable and obliging. It is no wonder that in turn she was popular with and even loved by the humble sisters of the Societies.

But she could be equally at home in the mansion of her close friend, Lady Huntingdon, visit at ease in the home of wealthy Mrs. Gumley, and be poised when at court with her son Charles or when conversing with the King.

The diary of a Bristol resident tells of a visit to the Wesley home where they heard Mrs. Wesley sing and play on the spinnet. He says she was noted for singing and for her love of music. She sang with a clear, sweet voice, and gave charming performances on the harpsichord. Handel's oratorio arias were her favorites.

In her later years, she enjoyed telling of an experience while traveling with her husband in their early days together. While resting in an inn garden next door to a parsonage, she suddenly burst into a Methodist song. The parsonage daughters heard her with delight and at once called their father, the Vicar. All complimented her and asked her to assist in the choir the coming Sunday. She replied that she would if her husband might preach. Finding that he was a Wesley, however, ended the matter!

Nine children were born to them, but six died in infancy, for medical knowledge did not protect as now, so that babies had small life expectancy. Their losses increased their natural tenderness and heartfelt sympathy with suffering.

A loud clap of thunder and a dash through the rain caused the miscarriage of the first and unnamed babe. In the fall of 1753, the first living child was born and named after his famous uncle John. Of course, he was greatly loved by both; but Charles, shy to show his love, wrote more or less playfully from London, "Why, I love him as well again as you do. Only you make the most of a little love, by showing it, and I make the least of a great deal, by hiding it." This child, as were two of his brothers later, was precocious musically; when only one year old he hummed tunes and beat time accurately. But smallpox, which had disfigured his mother, fatally laid him low while she was convalescing. His death at less than seventeen months of age was Charles' first deep grief in forty-six years. His brother's illness imposed double duty on Charles and kept him in London during the illness, death, and funeral of his first-born. Poignant resignation poured out in his hymns on this occasion—

*"Dead! Dead! the child I loved so well!
Transport'd to the world above!"*

*I need no more my heart conceal;
I never dared indulge my love;
But may I not indulge my grief,
And seek in tears a sad relief?*

*"Mine earthly happiness is fled,
His mother's joy, his father's hope;
(O had I died in Isaac's stead!)
He should have lived, my age's prop;
He should have closed his father's eyes,
And follow'd me to paradise.*

*"Turn from him, turn, officious thought!
Officious thought presents again
The thousand little acts he wrought,
Which wound my heart with soothing pain;
His looks, his winning gestures rise,
His waving hands, and laughing eyes!*

He then pictures him in heaven:

*"My prayers are seal'd, my child is fled,
Is safe on that eternal shore
No longer I his dangers dread,
The poisonous world's bewitching power,
The charms of sin, the tempter's art,
The fondness of a parent's heart."*

*"In a new world of light and bliss,
An angel now our child appears;
His joy hath made our sorrows cease;
His looks have dried our selfish tears;
His looks, where heavenly glories shine,
And calls us to the sight divine."*

The mother preserved a lock of his hair with this inscription, "My dear Jacky Wesley's hair, who died of smallpox on Monday, January 7, 1753. "I shall go to him, but he shall never return to me." She was afterwards to preserve the labeled locks of four more: Martha Marie, died July 25, 1755 aged one month, two days; Susanna, named for her grandmother, lasted eleven months; Selina, named for Lady Huntingdon, died October 11, 1764, after living only five weeks. When John James was born in late December, 1767, their hopes ran high.

John Wesley was pleased to have this boy named after him and, expecting he would be a preacher, as did also his parents, wrote, "It is highly probable that one of the three will stand before the Lord. But, so far as I can learn, such a thing has scarce been these thousand years before, as a son, father, grandfather, *atavus tritavus*, preaching the Gospel in a line." Indeed, four Wesleys in succession from 1600 to 1790 did preach the Gospel continuously.

But the dread disease, smallpox, again took its toll. Again Charles was held by his duties in London at the time of death and funeral. Broken-hearted, Mrs. Charles wrote her husband, July 6, 1768: "Our dear little babe is no more. His agony is over but it was a hard struggle before he could depart . . . He screamed three times about half an hour before he died—not through guilt, but through extreme pain . . . The rest of the children [a boy and a girl had also been born] are well at present, but we know not how long they may be so. The smallpox is at the next door but one to us, and I fear for my little Sammy." The monument in the Bristol churchyard, erected for the daughter, Sarah, bears also the names of the five others who died in infancy.

The first twenty years after they were married, Charles Wesley's duties kept him away from home for much of the time. His letters to his wife serve as his diary for many periods and bear a marked contrast to John's diary, written for publication. Charles' are more personal. He wrote constantly, giving a day-by-day account of his activities.

The terms by which he saluted his wife were more than perfunctory; they breathed love, "my dear partner," "my most beloved friend." His loneliness and longing are frequently expressed: "On Friday next, grant my heart's desire—see her I love next Himself"; "my heart is with you. I want you every day," etc. Constant solicitude in her illness and for her physical welfare is mingled with concern for her spiritual growth: if necessary, she should shut the door against company to keep inviolate the trysting hour with God. Exhortations to pious improvement, private prayer, and increasing union with God abound. Her own education and that of the children were occasionally, but wisely, touched upon—her shorthand and music, their Latin and memory work; with advice for their management.

His letters were very personal. "Without reserve" he could unbosom himself to her, his heart secrets as well as petty daily experiences, his narrow escapes, his health, the doctor's advice, his sleeping, and some business matters. He reported his texts, sermons, the kinds of time he had when preaching, his interviews, and spiritual experiences.

She had agreed before marriage not to interfere with his traveling or work. In playful language, but meaningly, he wrote her in 1758, "The *next* time you hinder me in my work will be the *first* time." Inquiries regarding her, love and messages from her friends, news about their mutual acquaintances, and his contact with others, including the King, interlard his letters. They also include many tender references to their children with revealing questions about them, their weaning, crying and teething, in which he seems specially interested, their "hooping cough" and "meazles"; ". . . and now let me inquire concerning our son Charles, 'the last, not least in love.' How many more teeth can he show? Can you bear to hear him in the night and not rise to—help him? No; but to hurt yourself. Can you forbear listening after his cries, or hearing them in your dreams?"

He warns against eating unripe fruit, advises Sam to ride daily, and encourages rising hours, Charles at 6, Sally at 7, and their mother before 8. Playfully he does not send love in cases of disobedience; frequently he invokes God's blessing on wife and children by name: "God bless my dearest Sally, may the Good Shepherd gently lead her and carry her and her live lambs in His bosom."

He regarded their union as a full partnership; and on one occasion he would neither accept nor refuse the offer of a good church living because he had not had a chance to consult her. It was more than mere rhetoric when on another occasion he wrote her, "I need not tell you, that it shall be just as *you* please."

Three children grew to manhood and womanhood, Charles, named after his father, born in December, 1757; Sarah, named after her mother, born in April, 1759; and Samuel, named after his grandfather and uncle, born in February, 1766. The last mentioned says in a letter written in his later life that these three were the only breast-fed infants of the eight. The father thought about them by day and dreamed of them by night. His letters to them exhale love and his anxiety for their physical and—even more for their spiritual welfare.

As might be expected from one of Charles Wesley's disposition, he was kind, amiable, tender, and sympathetic in the home. His daughter records that he never spoke an angry word to a servant and was never known to strike a child in anger.

At least Charles Jr. and Sarah attended neighboring schools, but all three children got their Latin and Greek direct from their father and all became good classical scholars. Though absent from home, he outlined their courses, checked on their progress, and encouraged them by his letters. Since Sammie was only three-and-a-half when

they moved to London, his father had opportunity to attend personally to his education.

In educational theory Charles Wesley was a product of his age, accepted Locke's theory, his mother's and brother John's: namely, the main secret of education, first and necessary, was to cross and break the child's will. Experience with his children, however, modified this for him. He did not appreciate the public schools of that period and regarded the contacts therein as "corrupters." In educational matters, he may seem heavy and harsh, but not only the times should be recalled but also the fact that he was in the sixties when Charles Jr. and Sarah entered their teens and in the seventies when Sammie became of teen age.

He gave many evenings to Sarah; on one such, instructing her in Latin, exasperated, he exclaimed, "You are as stupid as an ass." But, seeing her countenance fall at this outburst, he quickly added, with tears in his eyes, "and as patient!" Thus he showed the father entering into the educator.

Already has been noted the musical precocity of the first-born child at one year of age. The two surviving sons showed a similar precocity. Since Charles Wesley's accounts have been abundantly authenticated, his own words may well record this: "He [Charles] was two-and-three-quarters old when I first observed his strong inclination to music. He then surprised me by playing a tune on the harpsichord, readily, and in just time. Soon after he played several, whatever his mother sung, or whatever he heard in the streets.

"From his birth she used to quiet and amuse him with the harpsichord; but he would not allow her to play with one hand only, taking the other, and putting it to the keys, before he could speak. When he played himself she used to tie him by his back-string to the chair, for fear of his falling. Whatever tune it was, he always put a true bass to it. From the beginning he played without study or hesitation, and, as the masters told me, perfectly well . . .

"Whenever he was called to play to a stranger, he would ask, in a word of his own, 'Is he a musicker?' and if answered, 'Yes,' he played with greater readiness."

When the child was four, his father took him to London. There he astonished by his ability leading musicians who showered gifts upon him. Charles Wesley was told that the great musician and music teacher, Kelway, would not teach Charles Jr. for love or money. After hearing the boy, however, Kelway gave him lessons gratis for two years and said at various times, "I never saw one carry his hand so well. It is quite a picture. It is a gift from God. How would Handel

have shaken his sides, if he could have heard him!" "Were you my own son, I could not love you better." "His very soul is harmony. Not one of my scholars could have learned that in a year, which you have learned in ten lessons." "He treats me with my own music. I wish Handel and Geminiani were now alive; they would be in raptures from hearing him. Never have I heard any man play with such feeling!"

As with his mother and with his teacher, Handel's music was young Charles' favorite.

Charles Wesley attributed his son's remarkable musical ability to their mother but he himself was no mean singer and also a good judge of music. Poetic ability is akin to musical.

Samuel, the other surviving son, eight years younger than Charles Jr., was also a musical prodigy. Of him his father says, "The seeds of harmony did not spring up quite so early as in his brother; for he was three years old before he aimed at a tune. His first were 'God save Great George our King', Fischer's 'Minuet', and such like, picked up from the street organs. He did not put a true bass to them till he had learned the notes.

"While his brother was playing, he used to stand by with his childish fiddle, scraping, and beating time . . .

"The first thing that drew out attention was, the great delight he took in hearing his brother play. Whenever Mr. Kelway came to teach him, Sam constantly attended, and accompanied Charles on the chair. Undaunted by Mr. Kelway's frown, he went on; and even when his back was to the harpsichord, he crossed his hands on the chair, as the other did on the instrument, without ever missing a time.

"He was so passionately fond of Scarlatti, that, if Charles ever began playing before Sam was called, he would cry and roar as if he had been beaten . . .

"As his brother employed the evenings in Handel's Oratorios Sam was always at his elbow, listening, and joining with his voice. Nay, he would sometimes presume to find fault with his brother's play, when we thought he could know nothing of the matter.

"He was between four and five years old when he got hold of the Oratorio of Samson, and by that alone taught himself to read. Soon after he taught himself to write. From this time he sprung up like a mushroom; and when turned of five could read perfectly well; and had all the airs, recitations, and choruses of Samson and the Messiah, both words and notes, by heart.

"Whenever he heard his brother begin to play, he would tell us

whose music it was, whether Handel, Corletti, Scarletti or any other, and what part of what lesson, sonata, overture, etc.

"Before he could write he composed much music. His custom was to lay the words of an Oratorio before him, and sing them all over . . . We observed when he repeated the same words, it was always to the same tunes. The airs of Ruth, in particular, he made before he was six years old; laid them up in his memory till he was eight; and then wrote them down . . .

"He was full eight years old when Dr. Boyce, the great composer, came to see us and accosted me with, 'Sir, I hear you have got an English Mozart in your house.' I called Sam to answer for himself. He had by this time scrawled down his Oratorio of Ruth. The doctor looked it over very carefully, and seemed highly pleased with the performance. Some of his words were, 'These airs are some of the prettiest I have seen. The boy writes by nature as true a bass as I by rule and study. There is no man in England has two such sons as you.'"

Knowing some objected to bringing up sons as professional musicians, Charles Wesley said in a letter regarding the older son, that he had designed him to be a clergyman but that nature had marked him for a musician and there would be no way of hindering that but to cut off his fingers. Charles Jr. once told his father that he was so transported in playing that he did not know where he was or whether any other person was in the room. Strong bias of nature and unusual genius marked both boys as musicians; on this their wills could not be crossed.

All the world of that day seemed to admire remarkable talents. The Earl of Mornington, the father of the Duke of Wellington, came weekly to play his violin with the children; Dr. Samuel Johnson, hearing about them, came to Charles Wesley's home to hear them himself; even the Archbishop of Canterbury came. Along with pride in their accomplishments, their father had some misgivings about the spiritual danger of the gay world and of the fashionable worldly circles into which music would carry them. For a while, he would not allow Sam's name to appear in announcements; and he was constantly anxious about their religious development, as his letters manifest.

As early as 1760 he had given some thought to moving from Bristol to London; indeed in a letter to his wife he had mooted the possibility "to settle here." The house in Bristol was small; his work was mainly in London, necessitating long absences from his family. Many years later his daughter said the advantage for musical education in London and the dangers of a musical life made him want the children with him.

During several years various houses in London were examined. John encouraged moving to London as he wanted Charles near. Then Mrs. Gumley offered her house.

The famous series of concerts began at the new home and became quite a feature of musical London. Charles Jr. was twenty-two and Sam thirteen when these were instituted by private subscription. Charles Jr. was usually at the organ, while Samuel played the violin, though harpsichord selections and duets on two organs were interspersed. The tickets sold at three guineas each; but expenses were high, including refreshments of cakes, wines, rum, meat, tea and sugar. In addition there were expenditures for clothing and also considerable outlay for "Sally's hair," which must have been peculiarly refractory.

About eighty crowded into the large room at Marylebone, with its harpsichord and two pianos. Audiences included the Bishop of London, Lord Dartmouth, Earl Mornington, and other titled patrons as well as ambassadors; and at one concert aged General Oglethorpe was present.

When Charles Wesley met some criticism, he recorded four of his reasons for having such concerts at home:

"(1) To keep them out of harm's way: the way (I mean) of bad music and bad musicians who . . . might corrupt both taste and their morals.

"(2) That my sons may have a safe and honourable opportunity of availing themselves of their musical abilities, which have cost me several hundred pounds.

"(3) That they may enjoy their full right of private judgment and likewise their independency; both of which must be given up if they swim with the stream and follow the multitude.

"(4) To improve their play and their skill in composing; as they must themselves furnish the principal music of every concert, although they do not call their musical entertainment a concert. It is too great a word . . ."

John Wesley, to show his approval, attended more than once, at least one time in full canonical regalia and with his wife; but, when Charles wrote that his sons' concerts were after the will and order of Providence, John said he was "clear of another mind." He said also of his visits that he was a little out of his element among lords and ladies.

Musical circles and the titled class were not popular with many Methodists. In Bristol there was some jealousy of the boys' associations, while the stricter Methodists and the narrow-minded, fearing the society into which music might lead, murmured against Charles

Wesley for allowing his sons to cultivate their musical talents. Indeed all circles were more or less fearful. Although Dr. Coke later modified his views, he at first regarded the concerts as highly dishonorable to God; while the saintly Fletcher wrote to Charles, "You have your enemies as well as your brother. They complain of your love for music, company and fine clothes, great folks, and the want of your former zeal and frugality. I need not put you in mind to cut off sinful appearances . . . Only see you abound more and more, to stop the mouths of your adversaries, or of your jealous friends."

The three children, who grew to manhood and womanhood had differing dispositions and traits.

Charles Jr. had been a boy wonder. When very young, he had been exhibited in London, as we have seen, to the great pride of the father, but the experience did not seem to react unfavorably. He took to education only in music, being uninterested in other subjects; in music he lived and gained triumphs and fame. He was a Handel disciple and enthusiast; from that musician's work, he chose most of his voluntaries when organist in Marylebone Church. Nearing death, he hummed Handel tunes and imagined he was playing them.

Except in music, he was almost helpless and could not even dress himself without assistance. His sister Sarah looked after him for years. He was free from guile or sin, harmless, kindly, easy-going, not deep; unlike his brother, he was generous, reserved, and lacking in ambition.

In 1775 King George III, who, with all his faults, was a music-lover and a critic of no mean ability, having heard of Charles Jr., summoned the eighteen-year-old musician to attend him. Charles went in fear and trembling but made such an impression that he returned yearly during George's reign. When Charles reported to the King that he was the unsuccessful candidate for Organist of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey because he was a Wesley, the King rewarded him handsomely, giving him £100. The King's son, the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV, engaged Charles as instructor to his daughter, Princess Charlotte; so he was often and regularly "at court". His father appreciated the royal distinction but was uneasy about it. He warned his son not to expect much from it, fearing it would stir up enemies, and wrote his wife in 1786: "I am not sanguine in my expectation of good from Windsor. If Charles has received no evil by it, it is a miracle, and I am satisfied."

In 1770 Charles Jr. became infatuated with an unworthy but good, girl. Both his mother and father were unfavorable. Uncle John was sympathetic; he said he heard the girl was good but of no family. Mrs.

Wesley added, "nor fortune either." She knew Charles Jr.'s dependence. John, probably thinking of Grace Murray, sent £50 toward wedding expenses. But there was no wedding. The girl was saved from being the wife of a man married to music but otherwise helpless. Charles Jr. never married.

His specialty was church music. Loyalty to his father, who was opposed to any royal appointment and made a dying request accordingly, led Charles to refuse the offer of the organ position at Windsor. In fact, not until he was nearly sixty did he get a permanent position.

His filial relations were close and constant; he lived with Sarah and his mother until the latter's death; then with his sister until her death. Both were very dear to him. They usually accompanied him everywhere; for he needed them. His letters also manifest a deep love for his young brother, Samuel. In late life, he mourned a stolen, highly-prized topcoat which had been worn by his father thirty-five years before. In fact, inattentive to the value of externalities, he usually wore clothes of a by-gone era.

He and his sister held membership in the Methodist Society and attended Methodist gatherings as his duties permitted. His diary shows a religious disposition and a simple faith. At seventy-seven years of age, he died, as had his father—peacefully, just fading out by old age. The interment was in the Old Marylebone Churchyard.

Sarah, the only surviving daughter, was early a pretty child but, like her mother, later had her beauty spoiled by smallpox. Her father said it removed her from temptation. She never married, nor is there any record of love affairs. Her father took a great interest in her education, devoting evenings to reading history and Latin with her.

But she was increasingly a problem to him. When she was a young girl, he had trouble with her proneness to eat unripe fruit; later they had some difference over "narrow, fashionable heels" and also, as a young lady of twenty-four, over her going to balls and plays. Being somewhat of a psychologist and knowing she knew his mind about these things, he preserved a discreet silence and did not forbid her directly. This was the strongest restraint he put on her generous mind, and he appreciated her compliance. So too, while anxious about her spiritual welfare, he did not urge her to go to Methodist Societies, fearing his pressure might turn her against religion. He realized that she was grown up and had a will of her own.

Sarah's inheritance was not musical but literary and poetic. Though her father endeavored to encourage her and to help her in making verses, she turned more to prose themes. All through life, especially

in the leisure of her later years, she moved in high literary circles and enjoyed the special friendship of Dr. Samuel Johnson.

Uncle John took quite lively interest in his niece, took her traveling with him occasionally, and even considered making her his assistant. She gave, however, the main part of her life to serving her mother and brothers. After her mother's death, she lived with and looked after her more or less helpless brother for years. Together they overcame vicissitudes: such, for example, as when Charles was robbed and left for dead on the street in 1793. At another time they survived a dangerous, and almost disastrous, fire in their rooms.

In later years Sarah became quite a companion to her Aunt Martha, Mrs. Hall. Nearly seventy, Sarah died triumphantly and was interred in the Churchyard in Bristol where the five infant children of her father were buried. The inscription upon the tombstone, which covers the family grave in the burying ground at St. James Church, Bristol, reads:

"Sacred to the Memory of John, Martha Marie, Susannah, Selina and John James, infant children of the late Charles Wesley, M.A. of Christ College, Oxford, and of Sarah his wife; and also of their daughter Sarah Wesley, who departed this life on the 19th of September, 1828, aged sixty-eight years. [Error]

*"Hosanna to Jesus on high,
Another has 'scaped to the sky,
And lodged in Immanuel's breast.
The soul of our sister is gone
To heighten the triumph above,
Exalted to Jesus's throne,
And clasp'd in the arms of His love."*

Charles Wesley's son, Samuel, was quite different from his brother and sister. He was born when his mother was in her fortieth year and his father in his fifty-ninth. He too was, as we have seen, a boy wonder in music. Though proudly displayed as such, he was not spoiled thereby; indeed, in later life, the display humiliated him.

What a pity he did not go to Oxford and continue the Wesley record there! He had a keen and quick mind, studied Latin and Greek under his father's instruction, and followed up and drew enjoyment from these classics all his life. A man of wide knowledge, he was also a brilliant conversationalist.

Though he would doubtless have succeeded as a scientist or professional man, he was a musical genius and gave performances in

high circles; his compositions were played in St. Paul's Cathedral, where he himself occasionally officiated at the organ; and he played sometimes before Mendelssohn. While noted as a performer on organ and on violin, he achieved great distinction as a composer and for his skill in extemporizing. To the fame of his favorite musician, Bach, he made a real contribution. Nor, considering his ancestry, are we surprised to be told that he was especially interested in and proficient in writing hymn tunes.

We like to read of some of his boyish traits, such as his interest in animals and his menagerie at home. We learn also of his early devotion to punctuality; his going to bed at eight; his once leaving a concert after only the first part of the "Messiah," saying, "Come, Mama, let us go home or I sh'n't be in bed by eight." Once, when they discussed his possible playing before the Queen, he exclaimed, "But I won't stay beyond eight." But what was cute in the boy became less lovely in the man. Not mild, kindly, nor generous like his brother, he was wayward, hard to get along with, irritable, parsimonious, and often flouted authority and custom.

He did not get along with his old father, who, let us not forget, was past seventy when Sam entered his teens. The old man did not live in his son's environment. Since Charles forbade attending theatre, it is little wonder that Samuel gave him many headaches. That the young man grew increasingly to resent having been led into a musical career is indicated by such expressions as these that crop out all too frequently: "I hate public life; I always did and it was a cruel mistake in my education, the forcing me into it." Sam regarded professional music as "a trivial and degrading business to any man of spirit or of any abilities." Different from his older brother, he was not satisfied with such a career.

He, too, was invited to play before the music-loving King, but his father opposed any appointment by royal favor; so the opportunity and his creditable performances did him no permanent good.

But he gave his father, when an old man past three-score and six years, the greatest blow of the long life. Samuel had a close professional and personal fellowship with a young Frenchman, organist in a Roman Catholic Church, with whom he became associated in various musical enterprises. Having no deep religious convictions, Samuel became a Roman Catholic. He shrank, however, from breaking the news to his decrepit father; so for this purpose there was chosen the highest Roman Catholic Peeress in England, whose son, by the way, had left the Catholic religion and had become a Protestant. The old man was heartbroken. At first, impetuously, he blamed the financial

lure; then he poured out his lament in a poem of twenty-five stanzas, in which he mourned, then became resigned, and prayed. These stanzas read in part—

*"Farewell, my all of earthly hope,
My nature's stay, my age's prop,
Irrevocably gone!
Submissive to the will Divine,
I acquiesce, and make it mine;
I offer up my son!"*

*"Shock'd at the hypocrites profane,
My son, when undeceived, restrain
From worse, if worse can be;
Nor let him all religion cast
Behind, and shelter take at last
In infidelity."*

*"Against the instrument of ill,
O may I no resentment find,
No wrong, vindictive temper feel,
Unfriendly wish, or thought unkind;
But put the yearning bowels on,
The tender mercies of Thy Son."*

Of course, Roman Catholic circles rejoiced over this proselyte, who even drew the Pope's personal thanks for a High Mass which Samuel composed. His father did not live to see the outcome. Never a true Romanist, Samuel found Roman Catholic dogmas unpalatable and soon got into a controversy with a priest in which he said, "The crackers of the Vatican are no longer taken for the thunderbolt of heaven; for excommunication I care not three straws," and soon withdrew from the Roman Church.

Shortly before his death, Charles Wesley had another cause for worry about Samuel: the latter had a serious accident. Returning home late one evening, he fell into a deep excavation and lay unconscious for hours with a head wound. True to his times, the aged father would not consent to the operation of trepanning, which now would be performed.

From an errant ecclesiast, Samuel imbibed some very unorthodox and loose ideas regarding matrimony, which worried both his mother and sister. The latter wrote him spirited letters on the subject. But

in 1793 he was regularly married by a Church of England clergyman to a rather stout young lady, who bore him three children. The marital relation grew increasingly strained and, after a few years, she left him. A deed of separation was drawn up, by which he was to pay her an annual sum. These payments became more and more onerous; indeed for non-payment he was once sent to prison.

About six years after his wife left him and some years after his accident, Samuel began a liaison with his housekeeper. Of this union, several children were born.

While, like his brother, he had many invitations to inaugurate organs and to give recitals, he had no permanent church appointment until nearing sixty. Of course he taught private pupils and for twenty-five years held the, to him uncongenial, part-time position at the Girls School at Oxford House in Marylebone where he tried to teach music to the more or less interested school girls.

All his life Samuel seemed to suffer from a lack of funds. Even a legacy of one thousand pounds and a house from a wealthy suicide in 1783 did not appear to relieve him long. His various publishing enterprises did not have signal success. Trying to support his two families, involving the clothing and educating of two lots of children, kept him worrying constantly about finances. At various times he sought loans from his mother and from his brother and sister; in his desperation a pathetic plea was also made to his Roman Catholic organist friend.

The year his father died, he became a Freemason, joining Lodge No. 1, visiting many other lodges, and composing many glees for them, also an anthem to the words,

*"Behold, how good a thing it is,
And now becoming well
For brethren, such as Masons are,
In unity to dwell*

When the Grand Lodge created the position of Grand Organist, Samuel became the first incumbent, which honor, though he seemed at times inappreciative, he held for six years.

But, no doubt as a result of the injury to his head, he suffered a nervous breakdown in 1816. Previously he had periods of gloom and despondency, but now they became so much worse that once he even attempted suicide by throwing himself out of a window. Moreover, his creditors worried him almost to distraction.

Nevertheless throughout his unhappy life there were many manifestations of family love and loyalty. He made a confidant of his

sister Sarah, who desperately tried to help him religiously. Uncle John also wrote wise religious exhortations to his wayward nephew. The correspondence with his brother Charles Jr. was both professional and personal. He lived with the family in the Marylebone house until the lease expired in 1792. His mother deeply loved her younger son, and he was strongly attached to her; he was present at her death and felt it deeply.

During an examination of manuscripts at Cambridge, he was greatly delighted to discover, in Handel's own handwriting, six hymn tunes set to father's poetry. Three of these he published—

"Sinner, obey the Gospel word"; tune, "Cannon";

"O Love Divine, how sweet Thou art"; tune, "Fitzwilliam";

"Rejoice! the Lord is King"; tune, "Gopsal."

The prayers written by him on moving to a new home, and the one to his daughter mark him as a true Wesley.

An invitation to attend a preachers' children's breakfast in City Road in 1827 pleased him greatly and, of course, he went. He was proud to be Charles Wesley's son.

His mind was keen and he often broke out in wit, but his disposition was inclined to be satirical. In some correspondence he called two parsons "two black crows, one a blockhead and the other a brute" and described "fine folks" as "scrubbing their mangy carcasses in the sea." He referred to Shakespeare as "Billy" and Dr. Johnson as "my namesake Sammy." He reminded brother Charles of the distance of singers from the organ in St. Paul's, "a thousand miles." His disgust at having to teach in a girls' school made him exclaim about the drudgery of "more dunces assaulting my ears for six hours together." Once, disgusted with fulsome flattery, he said, "If fame and flattery would make a man fat, Sir John Falstaff would be a shrimp to me." He also declared Madan's statement had "more charity than truth" when he stated that half the world were contented to be fools and must let the other half know it. An unintentional exchange of hats gave him one "appertaining to some other skull." His own, said he, would fit the other's head "as well as the cupola of St. Paul's." A premature announcement of his death brought "numerous congratulations on my resurrection." In 1827 he wrote brother Charles, "It seems destined that I am to live (on earth) in hot water, which, however, is not quite so hot as another element in another world."

He died at seventy-one years of age, exclaiming, "O Lord Jesus!" and, as he died, "I am coming." Singers from Westminster Abbey attended his interment.

Of his children, his very first-born of his first union, who was named

Charles after his grandfather and uncle, showed both skill and diligence at school; he became a clergyman and rose to be sub-Dean at the Royal Chapel. The first-born of the second union bore his father and great-grandfather's name as well as Bach's. By his father he was affectionately called "little boy Blue," and later became one of the greatest Church of England organists, Samuel Sebastian Wesley. The name of this grandson of Charles Wesley appears as the composer of three tunes in the current *Methodist Hymnal* in the United States, one of which is the tune "Aurelia," to which are sung the familiar words "The Church's One Foundation."

Go back now to the last years of the father, Charles Wesley. He worried about both the financial and spiritual future of his two sons, and wondered whether, without outside influence, he would have directed them to musical careers. Misgivings clouded to a degree his old age.

His daughter described his last days to her uncle John Wesley—

"For some months past he seemed totally detached from earth; he spoke very little nor wished to have anything read, but the Scriptures.

"He took a solemn leave of all his friends. I once asked, if he had any presages that he should die? He said 'no' but his weakness was such, that he thought it impossible he should 'live through March.' He kindly bid me remember him and seemed to have no doubt, but I should meet him in heaven.

"All his prayer was, 'Patience and an easy death!' He bid everyone who visited him, to supplicate for these, often repeating an 'easy death!' He told my brother, the week before he departed, that no fiend was permitted to approach him; and he said to us all 'I have a *good hope!*' When asked if he wanted anything, he frequently answered, 'Nothing but Christ!' Some person observed that the valley of the shadow of death was hard to be passed, 'not with Christ,' replied he.

"On March the 27th (after a most uneasy night) he prayed, as in an agony, that he might not have many such nights, 'O my God' said he, 'not *many!*' It was with great difficulty he seemed to speak. About ten days before, on my brother Samuel's entering the room, he took hold on his hand, and pronounced, with a voice of faith, 'I shall bless God to all eternity, that ever *you* were born; I am persuaded I shall!' My brother Charles also seemed much on his mind; 'That dear boy,' said he, 'God bless him!'

"He spoke less to me than to the rest, which has since given me some pain. However, he bade me trust in God, and never forsake him, and then he assured that He never would forsake me!

"The 28th, my mother asked if he had anything to say to us; raising

his eyes, he said, 'Only Thanks! Love! Blessing!' Tuesday and Wednesday he was not entirely sensible. He slept much, without refreshment and he had the restlessness of death for the whole week. He was eager to depart, and if we moved him, or spoke to him, he answered, 'Let me die! Let me die! A fortnight before, he prayed with many tears for all his enemies, naming Miss F. 'I beseech thee, O Lord, by thine agony and bloody sweat,' said he, 'that she may never feel the pangs of eternal death!'

"When your kind letter to my brother came (in which you affectionately tell him you will be a father to him and to my brother Samuel), I read it to our father; 'He *will be kind* to you,' said he, 'when I am gone; I am certain, your uncle *will be kind* to all of you.'

"The last morning (which was the 29th of March) being unable to speak, my mother intreated him to press her hand, if he knew her, which he feebly did. His last words which I could hear, were 'Lord—my heart—my God.' He then drew his breath short, and the last so gently, that we knew not exactly the moment in which his happy spirit fled. His dear hand was in mine for five minutes before, and at the awful period of his dissolution.

"It often had been his desire that we should attend him to the grave, and though he did not mention it again (which he did the place of his burial) during this illness, we all mean to fulfill his wish; trusting we shall be supported, as we have been hitherto, in our afflicting situation.

"My dear, honored uncle my mother presents you her respectful love, and my brothers join with me in duty, begging your prayers for the widow and the fatherless!

"I am, your afflicted and dutiful Niece,

"Chesterfield Street, April 4, 1788

S. Wesley"

His widow survived him for nearly thirty-five years. She, with her family, lived in the Marylebone house until the lease expired; then with Charles Jr. and Sarah elsewhere in London. The Bookroom annuity was first capitalized to them. When that was used up, the annuity was renewed, going to Charles Jr. on her death and to the other son, Samuel, on Charles Jr.'s death. Wilberforce, who had been so captivated by Charles Wesley, provided her with an additional annuity of £60 a year.

She was welcomed and kissed by John Wesley on his deathbed. No fear of death clouded her own last moments, when she too faded out at the ripe old age of ninety-six.

Bard

Charles Wesley found relief in rhyme, and expressed himself naturally in poetry. If all his hymns and poems should be assembled in order of their writing, they would be an autobiography more complete and personal than any diary. Estimates of the number of his hymns range from 6000 up. Dr. J. E. Rattenbury says that he published 4430 and left in manuscript more than 2840 additional. Of such a large number some would, of course, be inferior, "doggerel", mere versification—some would say "mean", as John Wesley called them; but the majority were superior. History indeed has pronounced many excellent.

While most were composed in the quiet of his study at Bristol or in London, many others were made while on horseback. A letter to his wife tells of "singing or making hymns until I came unawares to Canterbury." In an account of a horse-throwing accident, he stated that the stunning "spoiled my making hymns." Indeed, many hymns have in their rhythm the jog-trot of the horse; many were mentally composed while traveling. One of his methods of composition is thus told by a young man who knew Charles Wesley personally in his later years:

"He rode every day (clothed for winter even if in summer) a little horse, grey with age. When he mounted, if a subject struck him, he proceeded to expand, and put it in order. He would write a hymn, thus given him, on a card kept for that purpose, with his pencil, in shorthand. Not infrequently he has come to our house in the City-road and having left his pony in the *garden* in front, he would enter, crying out, 'Pen and ink! Pen and ink.' These being supplied, he wrote out the hymn he had been composing. When this was done, he would look round on those present, and salute them with much kindness, give out a short hymn . . ."

His daughter Sarah records, however, that he had such a power of abstraction that he could read and compose with children playing in the room and with visitors talking around him. While the initial writing was spontaneous, he revised extensively for publication. His own *Journal* tells that he revised the Hymns on the Acts and the Gospels eight times in several years.

His thorough classical education is shown in many allusions. His hymns display real poetic merit, for he learned, from the great poets of the past, the laws of versification and the art of poetry. Virgil was his favorite Latin author, just as Horace was John's. His musical ear was sensitive to rhythm and melody, and he had a great bent for lyrical productions. He sang. Also from his education he had acquired a remarkable command of pure, elegant English, strong and simple, with a wide choice of words; he combined wonderful fluency and beauty of expression.

The range of subjects treated was as diverse as were his experiences. That he had become a master of metrical techniques stood him in good stead, for the endless variety of subjects treated called for many different meters, of which he used many kinds and combinations. In one Hymnal he seemed equally at home in all the twenty-six meters he used. His variety was greater than that of any other lyric poet in English. Unlike Watts, he seldom let the emphasis fall on the wrong syllable.

Above all, Charles Wesley was creative, had his own style, broke new poetic paths, followed no predecessor, and certainly went against the current fashion, which was too stilted for his free soul. Reality—life as such—characterized his utterances. Yet his bold imaginative flights with their vividness, metaphors, and exaggerations sometimes bothered his more prosaic brother John. Analysis of his hymns shows his acquaintance with the poets—Milton, Shakespeare, George Herbert, Pope, Young, and Prior. The last, being less stilted, was his special favorite. He also manifested familiarity with the Fathers, Matthew Henry's *Commentary*, Brevant on *The Sacraments*, the *Prayer Book*, the current *Spectator* and other publications. Dr. R. Newton Flew analyzed his hymns and found them orderly, with a logical outline in their structure.

His warm temperament did not militate against his sturdy virility. All feel his vigorous energy, intensity, and verve. His earnestness and sincerity break out frequently into passion and fervor.

True, he seems to have repeated and to have had a limited repertoire of motifs; but they were applied to a wide range of subjects even if, in the excitement of an experience, he burst out many times on one theme. Nor was he always happy on other than religious subjects—political, for instance—nor so free and easy in other kinds of poetry. And at times, it must be admitted, he produced too rapidly to be concise and finished.

But Methodists sang his hymns all over England. Carlyle has said, "Let me make a nation's songs, and I care not who makes its laws."

He was writing of a secular poet, but it is even more true in the religious realm. John mainly made the rules for Methodism, Charles its songs; both served. Frequently the value of hymn-singing in a congregation—the response of rhythmic, elemental human nature; the significance of expression and movement and the general effectiveness of music—is underestimated. It binds folks together in a congregation, provides an atmosphere which both prepares for and reinforces a message. Psychologists tell us of its suggestiveness; it is always used effectively in revivals.

But hymns also have an abiding value; individuals remember and repeat them. Charles records meeting a Roman Catholic boy on a highway in Ireland whistling a Methodist tune, and found that he could join in several hymns which he knew by heart. Both brothers tell of several converted by singing. One Irish preacher recounts how at a closed meeting in a barn in Ireland, a Papist hid in a sack to be ready to open the doors for his fellow-persecutors, but was so taken with the music that he listened all through the service and then roared out his conviction—much to the consternation of the congregation.

Many went to church on account of the singing. When Charles Wesley heard sailors singing "Nancy Dawson" (a tune similar to "Hear we go around the mulberry bush"), he wrote new words to that tune, which the scoffing sailors later joined in singing. In John Wesley's record of his private devotions, "sang" occurs nearly as often as "prayed." Charles often sang in the homes.

The Societies, in the long intervals between the preachers' visits, were held together, their enthusiasm sustained, and the doctrines kept in mind, by the hymns. Full of theology, they were as John said, "a body of practical divinity." They held the members true to the faith and kept that faith true, for singing is a natural means of expressing deep feeling.

Charles seemed miraculously led to furnish outlet for *all* emotions, to express all desires, and to reproduce all experiences as he wrote for all members and for all occasions. Multitudes, freed from various sinful lives, joined him in singing "my chains fell off." With him they sang of their penitence in heartfelt words, exulted in joy and praise, found and expressed comfort in sorrow, voiced confidence when passing through deep waters, told of longing, and created aspiration. He ministered to all in all moods. And those testimony meetings! Probably the nearest to those early Methodist testimony meetings is the Love Feast at a modern Negro Conference, when the Spirit moves.

Most testimonies were in song; no other means seemed available. Hymns led the thought on, expressed it, deepened it.

Cheap editions of the hymnbook, distributed from preachers' saddlebags, were in every Methodist home; but copies were hardly needed, as the hymns were known by heart. Individuals sang them as they went along highways and crooned them at work in house, shop and mine. The hymnbook for the Methodist Society member became a devotional liturgy, a Prayer Book, a Breviary, to give utterance to what otherwise would be "too deep for words." Its simplicity made it available to all. Either literally or by memory they took it into their secret places of devotion, were inspired by it, and gave utterance to their personal worship. Charles' consecration through his hymns became the self-giving and aspiration of others:

*"Here then to thee thine own I leave,
Mould as thou wilt this passive clay;
But let me all thy stamp receive,
And let me all thy words obey;
Serve with a single heart and eye,
And to thy glory live and die."*

*"Take my soul and body's powers,
Take my memory, mind, and will;
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know and all I feel,
All I think, or speak or do;
Take my heart; but make it new!"*

*"I want a principle within
Of jealous, godly fear,
A sensibility of sin,
A pain to feel it near;*

*"Quick as the apple of an eye,
O God, my conscience make!
Awake my soul when sin is nigh,
And keep it still awake."*

In fact, it would be difficult to overestimate the role of Charles Wesley's hymns in early Methodism. Not a member of the Societies was without them; they were repeated constantly. By them the doc-

trines were clarified and became part of daily life as they were sung and lived, not merely heard. Often song is more effective than sermon. Charles' hymns "fixed the language of Methodism"; his expression became that of the Methodists. A clergyman of that century averred, "For one who has been turned away by doctrine, ten have been induced by music." In fact, Charles' words became better known than brother John's. One biographer was led to say, "Methodism never could have become what it did without the unparalleled hymn-book. That, perhaps, has been more effective in preserving its evangelical theology than Wesley's Sermons and his *Notes on the New Testament*. Where one man read the homilies and the exposition, a thousand sang the hymns." That is even more true today. Luke Wiseman in the Tipple lectures at Drew said, "Even today if one wants to discover or to receive the essential spirit of Methodism or to do its characteristic work, one turns for inspiration not to John Wesley's *Sermons* nor to his *Notes on the New Testament*, nor to the Rules of the Society, nor even to usages of the Church called by his name, but to Charles Wesley's hymns." Bishop McConnell states that Charles Wesley's hymns went deeper into the consciousness than John Wesley's sermons; and Elmer T. Clark says, "Charles Wesley, through his hymns, has contributed more to Methodist perpetuity than all John's sermons put together." All this raises a foolish question—What would Methodism be without a John or without a Charles? We do not know; it had both! They were complementary. Charles' hymns prepared the way for John's sermons, and drove them home!

John had poetic taste too, and his translations of German were logical, clear, and polished; but he lacked Charles' terseness, freedom and fire. Charles was a better poet as well as a better preacher, but John was the statesman and organizer. John's piecemeal logic in his controversies was not so effective as Charles' short whiplash comments.

As a poet, Charles was contrary to his times and changed them. He gave a new culture to England. He set the masses singing. His bold, imaginative daring and his deep, spiritual fervor had both a current influence and an abiding power. His "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" has been sung by every generation, expressing confidence and comfort in Christ with love and yearning for Him:

*"Thou of life the Fountain art
Freely let me take of Thee,
Spring thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity."*

No sermon or prose could express or convey the depth and height of such yearning. In the original publication it was titled, "In Temptation."

Henry Ward Beecher said, "I would rather have written that hymn of Wesley's than to have the fame of all the kings that ever sat on the earth. It is more glorious. It has more power in it. That hymn will go on singing until the last trump brings forth the angel band; and then, I think, it will mount up on some lip to the very presence of God." Spurgeon tells how an ungodly man was brought to Christ by it when they were singing it in Exeter Hall. Hugh Price Hughes in his will asked that one line be placed on his tombstone: "Thou, O Christ, art all I want." Dr. Duffield, author of "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus", called it "*the* hymn of the ages."

Charles' hymns are found today in the hymnals of all denominations throughout the world. This fact helps to explain the title of a Wesley publication in the middle of the eighteenth century, "Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Use of Real Christians *of all Denominations*."

He had heard both Peter Böhler and George Whitefield wish for a thousand tongues to voice praise, so Charles wrote and all the world sings that wish even today as it is embodied in his hymn written to celebrate the first anniversary of his and his brother's May, 1738, experiences.

Not only "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" and "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing", but also "Hark the Herald Angels Sing", "Christ, the Lord is risen today", "Depth of mercy can there be", "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild", "Love Divine, all loves excelling", and "O for a heart to praise my God"—belong to all denominations and are used by them.

He wrote hymns for a period when subjective experience was emphasized; folks are more objective in expression today. But the abiding quality of the product of his pen is attested by the fact that about one-tenth of all the hymns of the current Methodist Hymnal in the United States are of his authorship; more than three times those of the contributor who ranks second.

Many tributes which were richly deserved have been heaped upon him. "After the Scriptures," wrote Dr. James Martineau, "the Wesley Hymn Book appears to me the grandest instrument of popular religious culture that Christendom has ever produced."

J. R. Green speaks of Charles as adding "sweetness" to the sudden and startling light of the Evangelical Revival; then he continued: "He was the 'sweet singer' of the movement. His hymns expressed the fiery conviction of its converts in lines so chaste and beautiful that its more extravagant features disappeared. The wild throes of hysterical

enthusiasm passed into a passion for hymn singing and a new musical impulse was aroused in the people which gradually changed the face of public devotion throughout England."

Unquestionably Charles was the poet of Methodism. However important may be its doctrinal standards, Methodism owes to the Hymn Book its popular theology and incalculably much of its religious experience, fervor, triumph over sin and death, and its missionary zeal.

A brilliant French critic, Dr. Leger, writes of the "endlessly varied combinations of meter and stanzas . . . verse and language strive to picture the manifold impulses of the soul, the vehement rush of religious emotions."

Bernard Manning's tribute is often quoted, "This little book (the 1780 Hymn book) ranks in Christian literature with the Psalms, the *Book of Common Prayer*, the Canon of the Mass. In its own way it is perfect, unapproachable, elemental in its perfection. You cannot alter it except to mar it; it is a work of supreme devotional art by a religious genius."

The Hereford *Journal* of 1840 published a poem regarding Charles Wesley:

*"He the sweet singer of our Israel band,
Pours forth in hymns, the harmony of song.
Sacred and fervent from a masterhand,
Charming and melting as they roll along."*

Probably his severest and frankest critic was his brother John. In a private letter to Charles, he said some of the latter's hymns were "namby-pamby." When he reviewed "Hymns on the Psalms, Four Gospels and Acts" in his *Journal*, John said some were poor and some only middling; but he also found some "excellently good" giving "the true sense of Scripture always in good English, generally in good verse." John also wrote of this publication after Charles' death: "Many of these are little, if any, inferior to his former poems, having the same justness and strength of thought, with the same beauty of expression; yea, the same keenness of wit on proper occasions, as bright and piercing as ever."

John Wesley preferred hymns that, quoting John Byrom, were more likely to make "the critic to turn Christian than the Christian to turn critic."

In the preface to the Hymnbook of 1780, John, as editor, wrote: "In these hymns there is no doggerel, no botches, nothing to patch up the rhyme, no feeble expletives. Here is nothing turgid or bombast on the one hand or low and creeping on the other. Here are no cant

expressions, no words without meaning . . . We talk common-sense both in prose and verse and use no word but in a fixed and determinate sense. Here are, allow me to say, both the purity, the strength and the elegance of the English language, and, at the same time, the utmost simplicity and plainness, suited to every capacity . . ." Late in 1789, John wrote in his *Journal* regarding his brother that he was "superior in learning" to all other poets of his day and that "none of them can equal him in strong, nervous sense or purity and elegance of language." When John had the Conference, in its brief obituary, say Charles' least praise was his talent for poetry, it meant not to disparage his hymns but to bear high testimony to the general gifts and graces of mind and character.

The only hymnist to be compared in great and abiding quality with Charles Wesley was Isaac Watts, the Nonconformist, whose most active period was when Charles was a child and young man. He is known gratefully as the author of "Jesus shall reign wher'er the sun", "Come ye that love the Lord", "O God, our help in ages past", "There is a land of pure delight", "When I survey the wondrous Cross", etc. While Watts appealed more to the average Christian and while his hymns were suitable for common worship, Charles Wesley voiced the more advanced Christian sentiment and would stir the people more. Watts in some hymns seems to exhibit more sympathy and to bring more comfort; but Charles' hymns were better written, more uniformly good and set forth the great truths with greater clarity and force. Charles, when paraphrasing the Psalms, etc., puts his own experience into Scriptural language; Watts tends to put Scripture in his own mood. Watts used a telescope; he saw Christian truths on a cosmic background: the "whole realm of nature," the vastness of the Universe and of Time. Charles used a microscope, saw the experiences of God in the soul. He was a greater artist.

Comparing them, Bernard L. Manning says, "Though Watts at times, probably excels Charles Wesley's best, the general mass of verse falls below Charles Wesley's average."

Never was Charles more inspired than when he put the story of Wrestling Jacob into a hymn, which voiced the search for and the discovery of the heart of God for every man:

*"Come, O Thou Traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see,
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with Thee;*

*With Thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.*

*"I need not tell Thee who I am,
My misery or sin declare;
Thyself hast called me by name,
Look on Thy hands, and read it there;
But who, I ask Thee, who art Thou?
Tell me Thy Name, and tell me now.*

*"Yield to me now; for I am weak,
But confident in self-despair;
Speak to my heart, in blessing speak;
Be conquered by my instant prayer;
Speak, or Thou never hence shall move,
And tell me if Thy Name is Love.*

*"'Tis Love! 'tis Love! Thou died for me;
I hear the whisper in my heart;
The morning breaks, the shadows flee;
Pure, universal love Thou art;
To me, to all, Thy bowels move;
Thy nature, and Thy Name is Love."*

When Isaac Watts studied this hymn he exclaimed: "That single poem, Wrestling Jacob, is worth all the verses I have ever written."

The extent and content of John Wesley's reading is a marvel; he records a variety of books read, with many critical comments. Since Charles did not similarly keep a record, some have concluded he did not read very much. But it was like him not to tell of his reading; he read more widely than the records show. Some books he read with John, and they discussed them together. But unquestionably he did not read so great a variety nor so many as John. Charles, however, read books on the Bible; he knew The Book thoroughly; he lived and reveled in it; no one could surpass him in knowledge of the Sacred Writ.

John said of the Oxford Holy Club that they were men of one book; Charles was preeminently so. He was full of the Scriptures; they just oozed out of him. Not only as a commentary on Deuteronomy 6:7, but as a personal testimony he wrote:

*"When quiet in my house I sit,
Thy Book be my companion still,*

*My joy Thy sayings to repeat,
Talk o'er the records of Thy will,
And search the oracles Divine,
Till every heart-felt word is mine".*

Charles wrote hymns on practically all significant passages in both the Old and New Testaments, including five quarto volumes on the four Gospels and Acts, also over five thousand hymns in his "Short Hymns on Select Passages of Scripture." His own preface to the latter reads in part: "God, having graciously laid his hand upon my body and disabled me for the principal work of the ministry, has thereby given me an unexpected occasion of writing the following hymns . . ." Every one of his hymns is saturated with the Scripture. Practically every one is full of Biblical phrases. Holy Writ is indeed woven into all, as a study of any one hymn will reveal. It has been said that if in some way the Bible could be blotted out, it could be restored from Charles Wesley's hymns. But his hymns were more than mere paraphrases. They were mediated through the man. Scripture became his experience, and, through him, the reader's or singer's. Yes, his experiences permeate his hymns—his conversion, his deep conviction, his personal religious history, his service to God, and his aspiration after Him.

One year after his conversion, he wrote a poem of several stanzas including "O for a thousand tongues." Twenty-two stanzas of religious autobiography, after reviewing the conversion, read in part:

*"With other eyes I now could see
The Father reconciled to me;
Jesus the Just had satisfied;
Jesus had made my sufferings His,
Jesus was now my righteousness;
Jesus for me had lived and died."*

And he proceeded with his experience, concluding:

*"Suffice it, Lord, I now believe;
To thee my ransom'd soul I give;
Hide it, till all life's storms be o'er;
O keep it safe against that day!
Thou ever liv'st for me to pray;
Thy prayer be heard, I ask no more."*

On one of his birthdays he ended each stanza with the line, "Bless the day that I was born." On another birthday he wrote:

*"With thanks I rejoice
In thy fatherly choice
Of my state and conditions below;
If of parents I came
Who honor'd thy name,
'Twas thy wisdom appointed it so.*

*"Oh! the infinite cares,
And temptations, and snares
Thy hand hath conducted me through!
Oh! the blessings bestow'd
By a bountiful God,
And the mercies eternally new!*

In his old age he again wrote his spiritual autobiography, part of which read:

*"As strong, and glorying in my might,
Valiant against a troop to fight
The battles of the Lord;
I scorn'd the multitude to dread,
Rush'd on with full career,
And aim'd at each opposer's head,
And smote off many an ear.*

*"But now, enervated by age,
I feel my fierceness gone,
And nature's powers no more engage
To prop the Saviour's throne;
My total impotence I see,
For help on Jesus call,
And stretch my feeble hands to thee,
Who workest all in all.*

Many of his hymns voice adoration and many breathe longing:

*"O Thou who camest from above,
The pure, celestial fire to 'impart,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
On the mean altar of my heart;*

*"Ah, show me that happiest place,
The place of Thy people's abode,
Where saints in an ecstasy gaze,*

*And hang on a crucified God.
Thy love to a sinner declare,
Thy passion and death on the tree,
My spirit to Calvary bear,
To suffer, and triumph, with Thee.*

*"Tis there, with the lambs of Thy flock,
There only, I covet to rest,
To lie at the foot of the Rock,
Or rise to be hid in Thy breast.
'Tis there I would always abide,
And never a moment depart,
Conceal'd in the cleft of Thy side,
Eternally held in Thy heart."*

In spite of his periods of despondency and gloom, "the dark night of the soul," he wrote more often in a cheerful, happy mood.

Personal vicissitudes gave occasions for hymns. His marriage made hymns flow freely. His wife's smallpox caused extended poetic outbursts. During her illness he wrote:

*"Humbly prostrate at Thy feet,
We our will to Thine submit,
Yet before Thy will is shown,
Trembling we present our own . . .
Let her, long a witness, live . . ."*

With thanksgiving for her recovery he exclaimed:

*"Brought from the gates of death, I give
My life to Him by whom I live;
Raised from a restless bed of pain,
I render Him my strength again,*

Other occasions called forth his muse: "On Sending a Child to the Boarding School", "For a Persecuting Husband", "For an Unconverted Wife", "For a Family in Want", "For One in Prison", "To be Sung in a Tumult", "Written on a Journey in Peril of Robbers", "On Going to Wakefield to Answer a Charge of Treason", "Occasioned by an Irish Judge sentencing Me in my Absence to Transportation", "After Deliverance from a Popish Ambush", "For Roman Catholics", "Deliverance from Shipwreck", etc.

His humility and ascription of all accomplishment to God show in hymns before and after preaching in Cornwall:

*"Fisher of men, ordain'd by Thee,
O might I catch them by thy love!
Thy love be first bestow'd on me;
And while the pleasing power I prove,
My tongue shall echo to my heart,
And tell the world how good Thou art."*

*"Jesus, to thee alone
I would the glory give;
O may I never seek my own,
Or praise from man receive!
Thou wilt, I firmly trust,
My feeble heart secure,
Exclude the sacrilegious boast,
And keep my conscience pure."*

After preaching to the Newcastle colliers he wrote:

*"Thy goodness gave success,
And bless'd it with increase,
Not for me, of Adam's race
Worst and vilest; not to me!
Thine is all the work of grace,
All the praise be paid to Thee"*

Charles' humility was proverbial. He knew of his talents and men might praise him, but he gave God all the glory:

*"With pride that I may never swell,
Or my suppos'd importance feel,
Vouchsafe me, Lord, the grace
To loathe myself in my own eyes,
Myself deny, renounce, despise,
And take the lowest place.
Here may I covet no reward
Nor trifles temporal regard,
Or reckon earth my home . . ."*

It was "after preaching in a church" that he wrote,

*"Jesus the Name, high over all
In hell, or earth, or sky;
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear, and fly." etc.*

The great truths of religion—sin, righteousness and judgment, the universe and God, intercession for all mankind, and the main Protestant beliefs—were his stock-in-trade. Special Methodist doctrines have been treated in a previous chapter; but with him, the greatest was *Love*, which evoked his most joyous, serious lyrics.

He was sensitive and sympathetic to all the deep needs of others as well as conscious of his own. Of his faith, there are many evidences:

*"Faith, mighty faith, the PROMISE sees,
And looks to THAT ALONE,
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries 'It shall be done!'"*

Praise, which ever rolled from his pen, arose from a possession and a confidence:

*"My God, I am Thine,
What a comfort Divine,
What a blessing to know
That my Jesus is mine!"*

Prayer not only was his exhortation but his own native breath:

*"Let us his command obey
And ask and have what'er we want;
Pray we, every moment pray,
And never, never faint."*

Nothing delighted him more than changed lives; he makes the Kingswood colliers say:

*"Suffice that for the season past
Hell's horrid language fill'd our tongues,
We all Thy words behind us cast,
And loudly sang the drunkard's songs."*

*"But, O the power of grace Divine!
In hymns we now our voices raise,
Loudly in strange hosannas join,
And blasphemies are turned to praise!"*

No place nor time escaped his pen. Current events, both local and national, were subjects for poems—some of transient interest, others of permanent value.

Perils and persecutions specially challenged. His brother John sang

for comfort on a stormy sea the hymn composed by Charles on a similar occasion:

*"When passing through the watery deep,
I ask in faith His promised aid;
The waves an awful distance keep,
And shrink from my devoted head;
Fearless their violence I dare;
They cannot harm, for God is there!"*

He strengthened, comforted, and cheered others when persecuted; and they sang with him:

*"But wilt Thou not Thy cause maintain,
The helpless, injured people right?
Yes, Lord; our faith shall not be vain,
Our faith in all Thy saving might
Shall bring the promised succour down,
And win the fight, and take the crown."*

National calamities like the earthquake in London—which called forth extended poems as well as a famous sermon—and national turmoil when the nation was threatened with invasion, gave him occasions to sing both his patriotism and religious concern for England. His "Hymns for the Nation" is an excellent example. Of King Charles I who was beheaded, he wrote discriminately:

*"Unhappy Charles mistaken and misled,
In error by a wretched father bred,
By flattery nursed, and disciplined to stray,
As born a Monarch for despotic sway;
Push'd on by Churchmen's interested zeal,
Overruled by relatives beloved too well . . ."*

Not only was he roused by various experiences with Roman Catholics in Ireland, but in the Gordon Riots in London against Catholics he wrote poems and reported a meeting to his brother: "I preached peace and charity, the one true religion, and prayed earnestly for the trembling, persecuted Catholics. Never have I found such love for them as on this occasion, and I believe most of the society are like-minded."

Every one of the feasts and holy days was celebrated with song. He was never better than in such: Christmas—"Hark, the herald angels sing", "Come, thou long-expected Jesus"; Good Friday—"Tis finished, the Messiah dies", "O Sacred head once wounded"; Easter—

"Christ, the Lord is risen today", "Love's redeeming work is done"; Ascension—"He ever lives above for us to intercede"; Pentecost—"Spirit of faith, come down", "Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire."

On Watch Night, folks of all denominations sing with him still, "Come, let us anew our journey pursue." And he never tired of singing of the Saviourhood of Christ: "O that the world might taste and see"; "Blow ye the trumpet, blow."

In 1745 he published *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*. Prefixed was Dr. Brevant's explanation of the rite with directions for its administration. Sixty-six of Charles Wesley's hymns follow, setting forth Brevant's idea with Charles' interpretation and with astounding variety. The Wesleys, as we have seen, made much of this Sacrament, regarding it as

*"The badge and token, this,
The sure confirming seal
That He is ours, and we are His,
The servants of his will," . . .*

Charles mourned its misuse and non-use:

*"Sad mutual causes of decay,
Slackness and vice together move;
Grown cold, we cast the means away,
And quench the latest spark of love.*

*"O wouldst thou to thy church return,
For which the faithful remnant sighs,
For which the drooping nations mourn!
Restore the daily sacrifice."*

He found therein, not a material presence, but a vivid spiritual "witness."

*"We need not now go up to heaven,
To bring the long-sought Saviour down;
Thou art to all already given,
Thou dost e'en now thy banquet crown;
To every faithful soul appear,
And show thy real presence here!"*

The hymns on the Lord's Supper are among his most important. They went into eleven editions in the next several decades, and are still available. Indeed, Dr. J. E. Rattenburg has recently published a 250-page book on Charles' *Eucharist Hymns*.

With such a happy home life as he had, we might expect the publications "Hymns for Children" and "Hymns for the Use of Families." In the former, which went into a second edition is his version of "Now, I lay me down to sleep":

*"God, be mercifully near,
Object of my father's fear,
Me into Thy favor take,
Me preserve for Jesus' sake.*

*"With Thy kind protection bless'd,
Calm I lay me down to rest,
All I have to thee resign
Lodge them in the arms Divine.*

*"Make the little ones Thy care,
Bear them, in Thy bosom bear;
Mark'd with the Good Shepherd's sign,
Keep my lambs forever Thine.*

In his preface to his publication for children, he said: "There are two ways of writing or speaking to children: the one is to let ourselves down to them; the other, to lift them up to us." Dr. Watts, he says, followed the first plan, but he himself the second. He says of his "They contain strong and manly sense, yet expressed in such plain and easy language as even children understand. But when they do understand them, they will be children no longer only in years and in stature." Probably one of his simplest is the well known, "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild."

In the *Hymnal for the Family* is the song he composed to be sung at his own family worship:

*"Me and mine I fain would give
A sacrifice to Thee,
By the ancient model live,
The true simplicity;
Walk as in my Maker's sight
Free from worldly guile and care,
Praise and innocent delight,
And all my business prayer."*

Henry Moore, John Wesley's personal friend and biographer, says of this publication: ". . . I cannot but give the palm to his Family Hymn Book. Such accumulated strength and beauty of expression,

in presenting the daily wants, pains, trials and embarrassments of a family to the God of the families of the whole earth surely never before was presented to the suffering children of men. We expect a man of real genius to be great where the subject is inspiring; but to be great in the privacies of common life, to be a real poet (while the man of God equally appears) in these littlenesses, so called, of daily occurrence, shows an elevation and spirituality of mind that has been rarely, if ever, equaled."

Salvation as a gift to all was not merely a controversial subjection but his personal experience and life message:

*"And can it be, that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me who caused his pain?
For me? who Him to death pursued.
Amazing Love! How can it be,
That thou, my God, shouldst die for me.*

He reveled in the closeness and mutual helpfulness of fellowship:

*"All praise to our redeeming Lord,
Who joins us by his grace,
And bids us, each to each restored,
Together seek his face.*

*"He bids us build each other up;
And, gather'd into one,
To our high calling's glorious hope
We hand in hand go on.*

*"We all partake the joy of one,
The common peace we feel
A peace to sensual minds unknown,
A joy unspeakable.*

*"And if our fellowship below
In Jesus be so sweet,
What heights of rapture shall we know
When round His throne we meet!"*

*"Help us to help each other, Lord,
Each other's cross to bear;*

*Let each his friendly aid afford,
And feel his brother's care."*

So with the class-meeting in mind he exhorted

*"O let us stir each other up,
Our faith by works f'approve,
By holy, purifying hope,
And the sweet task of love!*

It has already been noted what for many was his unusual attitude toward death and the reasons for it. He gave utterance to his attitude many times:

*"Gladly I hasten to decay,
My life I freely spend,
And languish for the welcome day,
When all my toils shall end."*

Heaven to him was not a far-off Divine event. He longed "to reside where Thou art."

*"'Tis there with the lambs of Thy flock,
There only I cover to rest."*

The Societies sang with him about heaven:

*"There all the ship's company meet
Who sailed with the Saviour beneath,
With shoutings each other they greet,
And triumph o'er trouble and death;
The voyage of life's at an end,
The mortal affliction is past,
The age that in heaven they spend
For ever and ever shall last."*

He was unashamedly other-worldly; "This earth,' he cries, 'is not my place, I seek my place in heaven.'"

The last or last few stanzas of nearly all his hymns refer in one form or another to the consummation in eternity or heaven. He imagines being with God, seeing Him forever face to face, and reigning with the saints above, free from sin and safe in God's hands. In his mind's eye he sees the exile home, the homeland, the promised land, the throne, the starry crown, the heavenly choir, the glory in the skies, the perfect day, and such.

His death hymns were testimonies of triumph. John, on his death-bed, sang one of his brother's hymns:

*"All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored!
O Jesus, exalted on high,
Appear, our omnipotent Lord.*

Deaths of friends made countless elegies flow freely from his pen. Most of these were quite lengthy. They included verses on Squire Jones, a former College mate whom he won to Christ; on Grace Bowen, a nurse to Mrs. Charles Wesley and her sisters; on Mr. Lampke, a theatrical musician who was converted from his infidelity through Charles Wesley; and on Dr. Boyce, the celebrated musician whom he pictures as performing with Handel in heaven. This was set to music by Charles Wesley's son.

He sang of Boardman, who labored in America but returned to England when the colonies rebelled, and died suddenly:

*"With zeal for God, with love of souls inspired,
Nor awed by dangers, nor by labours tired,
Boardman in distant worlds proclaims the word
To multitudes, and turns them to the Lord;*

*But soon the bloody waste of war he mourns,
And loyal from rebellion's seat returns;
Nor yet at home, on eagles' pinions flies,
And in a moment soars to paradise.*

His elegy on George Whitefield, part of which was quoted in a preceding chapter, ran to over five hundred lines, beginning thus:

*"And is my WHITEFIELD enter'd into rest,
With sudden death, with sudden glory bless'd?"*

Of his work he says:

*"He now begins, from every weight set free,
To make full trial of his ministry;
Breaks forth on every side, and runs, and flies,
Like kindling flames that from the stubble rise;
Where'er the ministerial Spirit leads,
From house to house the heavenly fire he spreads,
Ranges through all the city lanes and streets,
And seizes every prodigal he meets."*

*"Soon as he thus lifts up his trumpet-voice,
Attentive thousands tremble, or rejoice;*

*"No lover of pre-eminence was he,
Nor envied those his Lord vouchsafed to bless,
But joy'd in theirs as in his own success,
His friends in honor to himself preferr'd,
And least of all in his own eyes appear'd . . ."*

Charles Wesley kept up his hymn-making until the last. Shortly before death he voiced his confidence and peace in a hymn, part of which reads:

*"So shall I render Thee Thine own,
And tell the wonders Thou hast done,
The power and faithfulness declare
Of God who hears and answers prayer,
Extol the riches of thy grace
And spend my latest breath in praise.*

*"O that the joyful hour was come
Which calls thy ready servant home,
Unites me to the church above,
Where angels chant the song of love,
And saints eternally proclaim
The glories of the heavenly Lamb!"*

When too feeble to use the pen, he dictated to his wife:

*"In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worm redeem?
JESUS! my only hope thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart;
Oh! could I catch a smile from Thee,
And drop into eternity!"*

As his daughter Sarah's letter has indicated, he had no disease and little pain; he just grew weaker and—"passive, patient and prostrate"—lay until life ebbed out.

Charles Wesley was buried in the Parish Burying Ground in Marylebone, London. John was disappointed that Charles would not be buried with him in City Road. But Charles was a loyal Churchman to the last; his pall bearers were Church of England clergymen. His

tomb in London bears these words written by Charles for another but appropriated and applied to himself:

*"With poverty of spirit bless'd,
Rest, happy saint, in Jesus rest;
A sinner sav'd, through grace forgiven
Redeem'd from earth to reign in heaven!
Thy labors of unwearied love,
By thee forgot, are crown'd above;
Crown'd, through the mercy of the Lord,
With a free, full, immense reward!"*

In Memoriam

In the Conference Minutes of 1788 is this brief record:

"Mr. Charles Wesley, who after spending four score years with much sorrow and pain, quietly retired into Abraham's bosom. He had no disease; but after a gradual decay of some months

"The weary wheels of life stood still at last."

"His least praise was, his talent for Poetry; although Dr. Watts did not scruple to say that 'single poem, *Wrestling Jacob*, is worth all the verses which I have ever written.'"

A memorial tablet on the walls of City Road Chapel has first a favorite quotation of Charles', "God buries his workmen but carries on his work," then reads—

*"Sacred to the memory
of
The Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A.
educated at Westminster School
and sometime student at Christ Church, Oxford.
As a preacher
he was eminent for ability, zeal, and usefulness,
being learned without pride,
and pious without ostentation
To the sincere, diffident Christian
A son of consolation
but to the vain boaster, the hypocrite, and the profane
a son of thunder
He was the first who received the name of Methodist;
and, uniting with his brother, the Rev. John Wesley
in the plan of itinerant preaching
endured hardship, persecution, and disgrace,
As a good soldier of Jesus Christ;
contributing largely, by the usefulness of his labors
to the first formation of the Methodist Societies
in these Kingdoms.
As a Christian poet he stood unrivalled;
and his hymns will convey instruction and consolation*

*to the faithful in Christ Jesus
as long as the English Language is understood.*

*"He was born the XVIII of December, MDCCVIII
[should be MDCCVII]
and died the XXIX of March, MDCCLXXXVIII,
a firm and pious believer in the doctrines of the Gospel,
and a sincere friend to the Church of England"*

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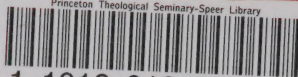
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